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LETTERS ON NOVELS—I

It should be an axiom in Toc H that the first service which any member can perform within the family is to contribute something from his own special experience to the enrichment of the whole. When, therefore, HUGH WALPOLE, the novelist, as a newly-joined member, asked how he could use his pen for a Toc H job, the Editor invited him to begin by helping his fellow-members in their own reading—for the more widely and deeply we all read, the more we shall qualify ourselves to understand and help other men. Hence the series of three articles by HUGH WALPOLE which begins in this number. Letter II will also deal with older novelists; Letter III with some living writers.

MY DEAR TOM,—Your letter has amused and interested me very much. I didn't know that life in Melbourne was so exhausting that even a novel—or at any rate, a novel about which you have to do any thinking—is too much for your tired brain. But I don't mean to mock. As you say, “it may be easy to *write* novels, but it's damned hard to *read* them.” I'll pass over the other things in your letter and try and do what you ask of me. All the same, it isn't so easy. I'll quote your own words to show you.

You say, “Novels nowadays seem to be read only by women. Men haven't the time. They are working all day and are too tired at night to use their brains. And that's the trouble. As far as I can find out all you literary blokes praise novels that are difficult and dull for the ordinary man and despise the easy, amusing stories—Wodehouse, Wallace, Oppenheim—that we find readable. I never read about books in a paper anywhere, but it all seems to me too highbrow—remote from life—and I'm made impatient by the airs these critic fellows give themselves. All the same, I have a feeling that there *is* something in some of these superior novels that would be worth discovering if one knew *what* to read and had direction from someone who wasn't too supercilious. So I invite your help if you can pull yourself down to so low a level as mine.”

You go on to say—because I'm sure you don't want too many of your own words hurled back at your head—that you were made, when you were a boy, to read Scott and Thackeray, that you liked Dickens and Stevenson, and that's as far as you've got.

You invite my help and you ask me to attempt something that would need a whole book to do it justice. But I can see that what you need most is a name or two and a reason or two with the names—a reason why these books are worth reading, why no man who knows about life and is interested in it need be frightened of them.

I agree with you at once about the superciliousness of highbrow criticism. For years now people have been trying to drive fine literature into a kind of enclosed holy chamber fit only for those who have learnt all the rites and have thereby become high priests of some special cult. I loathe all that preciousness, this pretence that literature is only good if it is difficult, only worth while when it deals with rare and abnormal sides of life, *never* valuable if it is popular. As to the novel itself, I'm sure that it should be often careless, and exuberant, and bursting with energy. I don't say that it isn't good sometimes when it's rare and precious—it's a wonderful medium and admits all kinds of things—but there are *no* limitations to it and Surtees has a place in it as well as Virginia Woolf and the farces of Smollett as well as the rich elaboration of Meredith.

I can prove this best to you, I think, by giving you the names of twelve novels—not more than any one novel by the same author—which would stand a good chance of recognition by most people as great novels.

Here they are:

Don Quixote Cervantes
War and Peace Tolstoi
Crime and Punishment ... Dostoevsky
Fathers and Sons Turgenev
Madame Bovary Flaubert
Père Goriot Balzac

Tom Jones Fielding
Wuthering Heights Emily Brontë
Pride and Prejudice Jane Austen
The Heart of Midlothian Scott
David Copperfield Dickens
The Return of the Native Hardy

Of course, all these names will be known to you. A number of them will have, unfortunately, a sort of smoky, dreary atmosphere round them, an atmosphere created by text-books and professors and highbrow commentators. I don't say either that they are the greatest. I suppose that if you were to get a committee of world critics who knew their job they'd agree that Cervantes, Tolstoi, Dostoevsky, Balzac, Flaubert, *are* the greatest novelists (using the word "novel" in its modern sense, that is, in the sense of the last two hundred years).

Strangely enough, it is difficult to be quite sure that any English novelist is quite on the scale of these other men—Dickens, Richardson and Fielding, perhaps—and I personally would add Scott and Hardy. Nor would I dare to insist (although I've as much pluck as the next man) that the novels I've named are the best by the individual authors. Pay your money and take your choice. Myself, for instance, I prefer Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov* to *Crime and Punishment*, Turgenev's *On the Eve* to *Fathers and Sons*, Dickens' *Bleak House* to *Copperfield*, and Hardy's *Woodlanders* to *The Return of the Native*, but these things are matters of individual taste.

What I do want to insist on right away though is that every one of these twelve is easy to read. They are as easy as *The Three Musketeers* or *Treasure Island* or *The Four Just Men*.

But I can hear you pull me up there. You'll say: "Oh, yes, easy to *you*. But then it's *your* job. You've been reading, writing, reviewing novels all your life. That's what's the matter with you practising novelists. You think everyone is interested in the things you're interested in—psychology, style, technique. Well, we're not. We want to enjoy ourselves when we read a novel; be carried out of

ourselves and refreshed." Exactly. That's the point I want to make. These twelve novels are great literature, but they are also enjoyable, very enjoyable indeed for almost anyone who has any capacity for enjoyment.

Crime and Punishment is the oddest of the twelve. It is true that Dostoevsky wasn't normal. He had epilepsy and after that day when he was taken out to be shot and at the very last moment pardoned, he saw everything a little queerly. Queerly, but all the same truly.

One of the strange things about these novels is that they are all true to life and yet all present life quite differently. You couldn't find two visions of life more opposed than those of Scott and Dostoevsky or of Jane Austen and Emily Brontë. If you'll order these novels from your bookseller (you've probably got some already: they are all in cheap pocket editions) and read them *all*, you'll have as rich a variety of life presented to you as you'll ever get. In fact, it is almost true to say that having read these twelve you need never read another novel again. That *isn't*, of course, true. You know my wild way of putting things, but what I mean to say is that there is in these twelve every aspect of life conceivable and also every art of which the novel is capable. They have narrative and poetry and technical brilliance, philosophy, humour and pathos. You have narrative at its very simplest in, say, the tilting of Quixote at windmills or David Copperfield's walk to Dover, psychology at its deepest in Tolstoy's Prince Andrew or Hardy's Henchard, pathos at its finest in Heathcliff's love, comedy at its *best* in Jane Austen's Mr. Bennett, poetry at its loveliest in Turgenev's Russian background.

These novelists are all following the drive of their own personalities; they are romantic, realistic, naturalistic, classical—but they are *all* true. You say to yourself, yes, Jane Austen saw nothing but the country parlour and an English lane on a Spring evening, while Emily Brontë saw nothing but passionate love, remorse, fiery anger and rebellion. Well, and so they must. There is nothing more foolish in contemporary criticism than this everlasting attempt to drive writers into schools and fashions, to insist that writers must be so-and-so because so-and-so is just now the fashion. There are no schools about any of these novels. The schools came *after* the novels, not before them.

Then the next thing you will find is that these novels are tests of yourself. You will like some more than others because some will be better suited to your temperament than others. Knowing you as I do, for instance, I should imagine that you will like *War and Peace*, and Jane Austen and Dickens. There is nothing mad nor abnormal about these writers. Tolstoy writes of one of the worst wars in history and Dickens' *Copperfield* has in it cruelty, adultery and robbery—Murderstone and Uriah Heep and Steerforth are none of them shining angels. Nevertheless, the worlds of these three writers *are* normal worlds. You who like—as you've said to me often—to know where you are with people, who shrink from craziness and abnormality, will feel at home here.

The real test with yourself, I think, will be with books like *Crime and Punishment* and *Wuthering Heights*. "They're all crazy," I can hear you saying—yes, but that's just the point. You are being asked by Dostoevsky and Emily Brontë to find nothing mean nor common, to have understanding for all men, the meanest,

the cruellest, the most abnormal, as Christ had. That is one magnificent thing a great novel does—it shows you the point of view of human beings whom, in your natural state, you would condemn. Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment* murders an old woman, a dastardly act for which no excuse is offered whatever. And so you, in one form or another have, at some moment in your life, murdered your old woman. You can find your own excuses for yourself, but if you read of Raskolnikov's crime in the newspapers you would feel that he was a creature infinitely lower, although I know well how generous-natured and kindly a man you are. Dostoevsky shows you that Raskolnikov's your brother—no, more, your very self.

Well, I must stop. I will try in my next letter to show you why I think these twelve books are so easy to read and yet so great in their effect on the reader that his whole life is changed by them.

Yours affectionately, HUGH.

NEIGHBOURS

Most members already know that TUBBY sailed on board S.S. Appam on December 28 for West Africa, where he will be given an opportunity of setting the ideas of Toc H before many of our fellow-countrymen in Nigeria. The first news of him to reach the JOURNAL is the poem, written "off Sierra Leone," which follows. It brings a plain message to us all.

FROM Marathon to Macedon
 A Jew, the butt of Athens' wit,
 Sent by his sole companion
 A letter, and his heart with it.
 "This to God's garrison of light.
 The world is dark; the work is vast.
 I am your neighbour day and night;
 For now I live, if you stand fast."
 Steeling his soul upon the team,
 Paul trusts the men for whom he's praying.
 The world can organise and scheme,
 But can it match this faithful saying?
 His glory and his hope are men,
 Whose love in Christ crowns all his labour.
 Whether or not they meet again,
 Paul stands as a perpetual neighbour.
 The first disciples understood
 To help a child is happiness.
 They afterwards learnt neighbourhood,
 How distance need not be distress.
 Your faith is weak? There's none to care?
 Friends are far separate by sea?
 Man, make this answer to despair:
 "My leader says he trusts in me."

AMONG LEPERS IN MALAYA

The issue of The Little Journal of Toc H Malaya in September, 1932, brought us a report of an address to the Kuala Lumpur 'Wing' of the Malayan Branch which is of great interest. The speaker was Dr. GORDON A. RYRIE, of the Sungei Buloh Leper Settlement, thirteen miles from Kuala Lumpur. We are glad of the chance to reprint the report (with some minor modifications) here.

I HOPE it may be of some interest to you to hear about one of the lesser known corners of life, a corner that we cover up, a corner where life is very much in the raw—and, I think, a corner that needs Toc H.

Sungei Buloh Leper Settlement has eleven hundred lepers living under very good conditions—and one tries to take care of them. First of all, what is a leper? Most of us have a general impression of something fairly hideous—something that rots the flesh, eats away the face, the hands and the feet, and is dangerously contagious—vague pictures from books—the leper white as snow, the leper whose touch is death, the leper that looms out of the dark ages with his stick and his bell and the age-long cry “Unclean, Unclean.” I remember first seeing a leper in the hot and evil-smelling streets at the back of Colombo. I can see him—or It—now, an old-looking man with great sores, about which the street flies buzzed—a tangle of dark, gummy hair framing a face that was an uneven porridgy mass. Only the eyes looking out of that clay-like mask were still bright and young. Some such picture we all have, and it is not an inaccurate picture of what a leper can be if he is neglected. I have brought some photographs and you can see what I think are fair representations of the kind of thing I mean. . . . These are the last stages—mutilated and loathsome—the result of neglect. I think you will understand from these the phrase of A. C. Benson when he says “The grave itself has no such horrors.”

That is, I say, the popular and general impression of the leper. If he is neglected, if we turn away from him in horror, if we just let him rot—that is what he will become. And I think our first natural thought on seeing such men is “Would it not be better to let these people die quietly, painlessly and mercifully, and out of sight of public decency?” Our answer to that is—Sungei Buloh.

Sungei Buloh is an attempt to bring health and self-respect to lepers, to save them from what you have seen, to make them something worth while. It takes more than a doctor to do that. There are eleven hundred men and women in Sungei Buloh, cut off from the world, cut off from all its hundred contacts with civilisation. In such a place things can happen that would nauseate the clean world outside; vice and degeneracy can spread like a contagion, foul customs and perversions can rise like rank weeds out of the pain and despair that is there. The history of Leper Settlements in the past can tell stories of horror that are not easily matched elsewhere. And yet Sungei Buloh is a place of clean, smiling faces, a community of self-respect and decency. They have their own schools and churches, their own cinema; you can see leper dustmen keeping the roads clean there, and leper police in their little streets. There are no needless horrors to distress the visitor—it is a pleasant place to dwell in. In contrast with the last photos, I show you now some

of Sungei Buloh patients . . . I think you will agree that there is a contrast. But as I have said, it needs more than a doctor. The doctor (and Government) can give them food, medicine, good housing, sanitation, but it needs the help of friends outside to give them the feeling that the outer world does not shun them, does not think of them with horror, has not just forgotten them.

Leprosy affects the skin and the nerves: the skin tending to come up in big lumps or sometimes in great red patches, the nerves die and the part becomes numb and anæsthetic. The leper tends to suffer from bouts of fever like a chronic malaria, and from nerve-pulling—like the tug of a dentist, shooting down the arm or leg. With proper care the pain and fever can be controlled and the leper can live a fairly normal life, do some work, play football, take his place in the community, keep his own personality. But he needs help all the time, and encouragement, and he needs people to stand by him. With that, his courage and ability to make good, and his gratitude are features that make the leper very lovable. Let me tell you of one or two of them.

In the back streets of Kuala Lumpur two years ago a Eurasian and his children lived in a state of drunken squalor. Antony, as I will call him, was a degenerate with most of the weaknesses and contemptible qualities that mark a man at his worst. We can't blame him—he had grown up without a chance. Antony had been a clerk in a shop in Kuala Lumpur. Unknown to himself the seeds of leprosy lying dormant in his system were waking and beginning to grow. He had attacks of low fever and—as a man will under these circumstances—he grew shiftless and lazy and lost his self-respect. His home became, as I have said, a drunken, squalid place. One afternoon there was a quarrel. Knives were drawn and Antony tried first to kill his wife and then to commit suicide, but he hadn't the courage to do either. Panting with weak rage and half weeping he flung out of the house. He walked on and on. It rained—he didn't notice. The rain stopped and still he walked on, his mind a turmoil of rage, of self-pity, of how he had lost his job, of the bitterness and hopelessness of it all. On he went, sobered by the fresh air, until he realised that he was dead tired and chilled to the bone. By this time he was out of the streets into open country. He looked round exhausted. He saw the rain-drops glittering on the *lalang* and thought how wonderful it would be just to sleep and sleep on the cool grass. He lay down and slept. Next morning he woke and found himself in a blaze of fever and covered with great red patches of leprosy. A few days later he was brought to Sungei Buloh—a man badly frightened and apparently as unwholesome in character as in body.

He was nursed back to health and put in a little cottage in the Settlement. To begin with he had many troubles. He wouldn't wash, he wanted to lie in bed all day. He kept his house dirty. He tried to smuggle in opium and *samsu*. He whined continually about his pains. He wrote me long petitions. Between scolding and coaxing we gradually got rid of the worst of his habits. Then we decided to take a risk. We made him a male nurse in the wards and got him a salary. A member of Toc H gave him a suit of European clothes and some underclothing, collars and a tie. Someone else gave him a watch and a pair of shoes and still another friend gave him a topee. With something responsible to do and the interest

of friends outside, Antony changed. He wrote to his wife, sent her part of his salary every month; he nursed the sick with care and efficiency, and took his own treatment regularly. I am telling his story because to-day I signed the certificate that he is cured of his leprosy. He is going out this week—cured—to a new job, with new courage. I have wondered once or twice if that suit of clothes and a kindly word from that gentleman of Toc H was the turning point of Antony's career. Anyway, he made good.

Let me tell you of another—called, I believe, Ramon, a Tamil—I have never quite known what his name was. He is known as "the *Bodoh*," (Child) but as he is both deaf and dumb it is a piece of humour that is quite kindly and hurts nobody. The Bodoh came to us in septic rags, emaciated, half starved and covered with sores. I imagine he had been a butt for the practical humorist wherever he went. He could tell us nothing of himself as he could only make clucking noises, and point. No one knew where he came from or what he wanted. He had a number of other diseases besides leprosy, and was incredibly dirty. Can you imagine a more complete solitary confinement for life—a leper, cut off from society; dumb—unable to express himself, and cut off from the whole world of sound? That was the raw stuff we got.

The Bodoh improved rapidly. He was amazed at getting any attention at all to begin with and little extra attentions rather overwhelmed him. As soon as he began to get better he responded by following me about everywhere and showing a pathetic, dog-like affection. Again friends in Kuala Lumpur came to the rescue. He was given an old army tunic and khaki trousers, shoes and socks instead of the ordinary hospital clothes. I have often wished that those who gave these gifts could have seen the grins and chuckles and the naive delight on the face of the Bodoh when he first got them on. He imagined himself a soldier and strutted importantly about, getting in everyone's way, and proud as a peacock. In the evening he started to follow me out of the Settlement. I turned and motioned him to stay where he was, and so left. Next day when I came to the Settlement, there was the Bodoh where I had left him. He had stood there all through the night, had refused to go for food, and was utterly exhausted and ill when I saw him. Some vague idea of doing his duty, of not letting me down, of showing his gratitude somehow, had filled his mind—I had to nurse him again for weeks in the hospital after it. Only a Tamil half-wit—yet, but with something fine and something of the Roman soldier in him. He plays with the children, runs errands, and endures a good deal of fooling with perfect good humour, and he is happy and contented. From time to time friends give a tin of biscuits or fruit, or a dollar or so for the Bodoh. It has been worth while.

I think these examples can give you a glimpse of what can be done, and of what Toc H can help with. There rises the other question "Is it safe"—and perhaps—"Is it not disgusting?" To the question "Is it safe?"—I answer unhesitatingly "Yes." Leprosy is not contagious in the old sense of the word. Under modern conditions such as prevail in Sungei Buloh there is no possible chance of a visitor getting leprosy. It requires prolonged contact—perhaps over years—and a very low state of health before leprosy can be contracted. I doubt if any healthy adult could contract leprosy by any means.

To the other question: "Is it not disgusting?"—I can only believe that every man with a spark of generosity or even common humanity will say "No." These men and women are human beings, many of them educated; many of them I number among the finest characters I have ever met. Let me quote to you in this connection the *Open Letter* of R. L. Stevenson to the Rev. Dr. Hyde of Honolulu. Molokai, a Samoan island near there, was, forty years ago, a leper island. Here, Father Damien, the Belgian priest, lived and worked among these lepers in a place with no antiseptics or cleanliness, contracted leprosy himself and died among the leper flock. He was a man of many faults—a rough, Belgian peasant. But he found Molokai a place of horror and made it a place of comparative kindness and humanity.

After his death a certain Rev. Dr. Hyde of Honolulu (which is next to Molokai) wrote to a clerical friend of his saying that really the work of Father Damien was greatly exaggerated and that the man himself was of a low character. This Rev. Hyde had a very comfortable manse in Honolulu, and his letter so roused R. L. Stevenson that he wrote a letter in reply, part of which I want to quote:

"We are not all expected to be Damiens; a man may conceive his duty more narrowly, he may love his comforts better; and none will cast a stone at him for that. . . . Your Church and Damien's were in Hawaii upon a rivalry to do well: to help, to edify, to set examples. You having (in one huge instance) failed and Damien succeeded, I marvel it should not have occurred to you that you were doomed to silence; that when you had been outstripped in that high rivalry and sat inglorious in the midst of your well-being, in your pleasant room—and Damien, crowned with glories and horrors, toiled and rotted in that pig-sty of his under the cliffs of Kalawao—you, the elect who would not, were the last man on earth to collect and propagate gossip on the volunteer who would and did. . . . You, who do not even know its situation on the map, probably denounce sensational descriptions, stretching your limbs the while in your pleasant parlour on Beretania Street. When I was pulled ashore there one early morning, there sat with me in the boat two sisters, bidding farewell (in humble imitation of Damien) to the lights and joys of human life. One of these wept silently: I could not withhold myself from joining her. Had you been there, it is my belief that nature would have triumphed even in you; and as the boat drew a little nearer and you beheld the stairs crowded with abominable deformations of our common manhood, and saw yourself landing in the midst of such a population as only now and then surrounds us in the horror of a nightmare—what a haggard eye you would have rolled over your reluctant shoulder towards the house on Beretania Street! Had you gone on; had you found every fourth face a blot on the landscape; had you visited the hospital and seen the butt-ends of human beings lying there almost unrecognisable, but still breathing, still thinking, still remembering; you would have understood that life in the lazaretto is an ordeal from which the nerves of a man's spirit shrink, even as his eye quails under the brightness of the sun; you would have felt it was (even to-day) a pitiful place to visit and a hell to dwell in. . . . I do not think I am a man more than usually timid; but I never recall the days and nights I spent upon that island promontory (eight days and seven nights), without heartfelt thankfulness that I am somewhere else."

Perhaps that illustrates what I think is the spirit of generosity and of pity that must inspire any man who has the imagination to see what it is to be a leper.

What can Toc H do? There are a hundred things that lepers can use to make themselves more at home, and more in contact with civilisation, that are discarded from our houses every day. Old shoes, old suits, old hats and toys, books and magazines, socks and stockings and jerseys, potplants and gramophone records, pictures, money, tobacco, pipes, old tennis shirts—lepers can make use of them. Their gratitude for these things is pathetic, for lepers are the most grateful people in the world.

Visitors who come to the Settlement can make the inmates feel that the outside world has not forgotten them. Most of all, with the interest you can take, these people can feel that they are not outcasts, that their lives are not meaningless, that they are still human beings.

Leprosy at present takes years to cure. We try with new drugs and appliances to experiment, always hoping that we may some day find ways to alleviate this disease. That is the doctors' side, and a fascinating one it is, although too long and technical to speak of here. But every patient hopes—with an intensity that we cannot conceive—keeps on hoping against hope that a day will come, a new Dawn when a cure for leprosy shall be found. You could help them—and me—to keep our courage and optimism against odds that for them are very great.

“ALL RANK ABANDON YE THAT ENTER HERE”

THIS old notice is probably reproduced more than any other of the many wisecracks with which Tubby enlivened the walls of Talbot House. It is to be found quoted or misquoted in nearly every place where Toc H meets, for it embodies a fundamental principle of family life. None the less it has been provocative of more misunderstanding and responsible for more damage to Toc H than probably any other single saying.

As originally used it was a joke, but a joke that was meant to convey a very definite suggestion. Just because it was a joke, men smiled at it and remembered their inherent brotherhood; even sergeant-majors were not proof against its potency. Certain young solemnities of the staff failed to appreciate the joke and muttered darkly that the House was subversive of discipline, but wise men like the Army Commander smiled approvingly.

Conditions have altered with the passing of years but the old notice is still a happy hint to visitors and members alike that in the friendly atmosphere of Toc H there is no need for them to stand on their dignity or to shelter behind their rank; but it is also—and this is most important—an assurance that nobody will take advantage of their willingness to lay aside their protective rank or title. It says in effect “Leave your dog at the door, we are all friends here, nobody will bite you.”

It is an invitation to each individual to lay aside that which Toc H has no right to take from him. It is never under any circumstances a direct or indirect invitation to the members to take advantage of their guests, either by depriving them of their

rank or by treating them with less courtesy or consideration than would be shown to them elsewhere. The move to abandon rank must come from the individual and not to be forced upon him by the membership. Toc H has suffered because some have not recognised this fact and have been over hasty in depriving strangers of their titles and in saddling them instead with some inappropriate nickname. Strangers thus treated not unnaturally refuse future invitations with the result that many good men have been lost to Toc H. This is bad enough, but it is not the limit of the damage done, for many have gone away to warn their friends against a society that refuses to thank its speakers, and treats its visitors with what appears to them to be gratuitous rudeness.

Even among brother members the old notice may lead to unnecessary heart-burning unless we realise that its interpretation requires a light touch. The Branch that keeps a fine box for those unable to bring their courage to the sticking point of calling a senior man by a nickname, is not really forwarding the purpose of Toc H. If it is friendly intimacy that we are seeking to cultivate, let us remember that intimacy can only grow naturally, and cannot be artificially or automatically created by the bestowal of a nickname. Nicknames are the fruit of intimacy, and nothing but a strained, unnatural parody of the real thing is achieved by putting the cart before the horse. Let no man, therefore, be blamed for being natural and for being unable to presume on insufficient acquaintance to drop a "handle" or to bestow a nickname. Even when a senior man has shown his willingness to forego formality, a junior member may still feel diffident of calling him either by his Christian name or by some hastily invented pseudonym. The difficulty in the early stages may be overcome either by calling him by his initials, or by some such friendly generic title as "Uncle." But let us have no hard and fast rules, for here, as in everything else connected with Toc H, true love is the touchstone of behaviour: "Love is very patient, very kind, love knows no jealousy, love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude." If we remember this, the old notice will help as it did, and not hinder—as it sometimes does—the spirit of our meetings and the quality of our fellowship.

M. P. G. L.

THE LIGHT OF A TORCH

Toc H has long since realised that the meanings of its symbol of Light are inexhaustible. There have been many interpretations of it. Here is one from the Pilot of Paddock Group, Huddersfield.

THE other night, as is my wont, I betook me to my bedroom with the thoughts of deep sleep and pleasant dreams in my mind. Whilst undressing my eye caught my pocket torch, placed on my table. And I thought of Light. Then what follows came to my mind, and I want to pass the thoughts on for what they are worth to my brother members of Toc H.

My torch is a light which "shines before men." Its power is derived from a dry battery held within itself. And very handy, too; many times have I been glad of it on dark evenings—many times has it prevented me from being lost or stumbling. But its power to shine is limited to the electricity stored up within the

battery. And many times have I felt like expressing myself forcibly when the "juice" has failed at some critical moment.

This thought led me back to my schooldays and to what I then learnt of more permanent sources of electricity and light. I remembered the accumulator we used for various electrical experiments; the accumulator used on cars for lighting. And I realised that a brighter light was possible, and for longer periods than was possible with a dry battery such as my torch contains. But an accumulator has periodically to be recharged. Ask anybody who uses them for wireless; or anyone who has been pulled up by the police for leaving the car without lights! Nevertheless, an accumulator *can* be recharged—a dry battery, methinks, *cannot*. How, then, is this recharging accomplished? Why, by connection with an apparatus which is either making current or changing current into such form as is needed for the particular purpose.

My thoughts then went to the most permanent form of lighting—the system installed in our houses and public buildings—the "mains." We turn on our switch and the room is lighted. And besides being the most permanent form of lighting, we have then the most powerful form. Compare the arcs of the modern theatre or cinema with the little light of my torch! But sometimes the supply fails—and we are like children lost in the dark, searching about for candles which never seem to be where they are wanted, burning our fingers with match after match. Nevertheless, the supply can only fail because the manufacturing plant is out of order, or because there is a faulty connection somewhere; or, of course, the lamp might be faulty.

Now for the application of all this. There are, I think, men in Toc H in all the three stages which my types of lighting represent. First, there are those whose shining is spasmodic—who burn out quickly with the enthusiasm of a new idea, waiting for a new battery in the shape of some fresh enthusiasm or newer idea. Let us not despise such shining—remember the electric torch has its uses: it can serve where accumulators or mains are impossible. Then there are those whose light shines more steadily, and perhaps a little brighter; those who somehow take in supplies of power to shine and, like an accumulator, retain it and give it out steadily. They are more reliable, and I think many Toc H blokes come within this category. But they feel the need of periodic recharging. They realise the fact that they cannot go on indefinitely shining without renewal of power. What an argument for church-going, for retreats—spending hours and days attached specially to the "mains"! You will notice that this type is definitely dependent upon power from outside of themselves and, unlike the first type, cannot rely solely upon their own make-up. But there are those (and this should be our aim) whose light is perpetually lit from the mains—who, when the power fails, look first at themselves (the lamp) and then at the connections (their prayer life), realising—and here the analogy breaks down—that the source of supply never fails, since God is God. May God grant that someday we may all attain this third stage of permanent connection with the source of all power, so that our light may indeed shine before men, and so that they may know and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

S. H.

CLUBS FOR BOYS

We are greatly indebted to Capt. R. T. THORNTON, of the National Association of Boys' Clubs (27, Bedford Square, London, W.C.1) for the article which follows. All Toc H units which are running Boys' Clubs are strongly advised to get in touch with the N.A.B.C., if they have not already done so.

I.—The Boy

FOR his first five years the world he knew was the court in which he first saw the light of day, with an occasional glimpse of the streets beyond. The smells of food and washing, pungently mingled, were his earliest memories. Amid the goings and comings of elder brothers and sisters, only his mother remained a *constant* factor in his life. His father, in his earliest days, may have been remembered only as a very occasional visitor, who arrived in strange clothes covered in mud to be gone again almost at once.

At five years old his mother took him to school, and he found himself for some hours of the day in clean, airy surroundings, with many others of his own age. Here for nine years he grew up, spending his time between the companionship and the discipline of school and the cramped surroundings of his home. His brothers and sisters came and went. He met them as they came home from work, and watched them as they bolted their tea and left to make room for the others. In the morning before he woke, they had left.

His mother was still the only *constant* factor. She was always there, washing and mending and preparing meal after meal as the members of the family came home. For ever busy, but not too busy to take an interest in his doings and to give a kindly word of encouragement.

As time went on he began to get beyond the rudiments of learning at school and to form ambitions. Life was beginning to hold possibilities of adventure, and he was eager to escape and try his hand at them. He would get a job and, by regular attendance at Evening Classes, he would learn the job properly and climb the ladder. Others from that school had done it and he would, too. He was going to get to the top. There was no end to the possibilities.

His fourteenth birthday dawned, and he was called to an interview about employment. He was told of an opening which might lead far if a chap really learnt the work properly, and evening schools would help there. But the pay was poor, while in another place the pay was good, although the job did not seem to lead anywhere. Dad was out of work and money mattered at home and, after all, life as a van-boy meant seeing the world a bit, and if a chap was alive there was always a chance of picking up something better. And so he took the van-boy's job in preference to the dull routine which might have led him up the ladder.

His first Friday night as a wage-earner made him swell with pride. He brought his wages home and, with a flourish, pushed them across the table to his mother. At last he was done with school and kids. He was a man now and as good as the next. His poor old father had been 'out' for months, but he would never be out. Tea finished, he pulled his cap over his eyes and swaggered out of the

room. Out in the court there were only kids playing round the lamp and he strolled on towards the streets. He and his mate, Bill, met at the corner and spent a real evening at the pictures. Saturday night was not quite so satisfactory though there was plenty going on in the street. As the days went on there did not seem to be much to do. Someone suggested the Dogs, but he had vague feelings that there was not much use in that. He and Bill, and a few others, would meet and discuss in a desultory way what they should do, but it usually ended in just standing round. He thought of evening school, but what was the use? Book-learning wasn't going to help a van-boy and anyhow he was finished with school. He wasn't a kid any more.

Life wasn't so bad really, what with the pictures and football news and the dogs when one had a bit of luck. He had started going to them by now and was getting to know a bit about horses, too. But spending money did not last too well, and somehow the more excitement one got that way the duller the evenings one spent hanging round in the rain waiting for Friday night. Mother had the other children to put to bed, and it was no good going home and crowding the place out.

On some of those evenings one was fed-up, and he and Bill and their mates would stand round without even enough go in them to chip the passers-by, but on other nights they were bursting for a lark, and once or twice had come near being caught by the police. But a chap must have some excitement.

There were times when he began to wonder about things. Things you could not talk about for fear of being laughed at. But he wished he had someone to ask. Dad was not any good and Mother was always too busy. Life had seemed to hold so many possibilities. They seemed to be slipping away and he did not understand why. Altogether things were very puzzling.

The work was not too bad. The chap that drove the van was a sport, and one saw a bit of life. But nothing seemed to happen. No one seemed to care much what happened to him and he felt a bit lonely when those black moods were on him. And then came the final disillusionment. In spite of doing his job well and never having crossed the boss, just after he was sixteen he went to draw his pay and got the sack.

II.—The Man

HE was a member of the Toc H Branch and a keen member at that. But he was worried. At one of the meetings it had been decided to take on a job of work with the boys of the town. Several members were all agog to help and they set about starting a club. They found a fairly large room and set to work with a will to clean it out and distemper the walls. The work went well, and in course of time they finished and were ready for the boys. They had an old billiard table and they hoped to get a set of gloves. They had arranged that four of them should each take a night so that the club would be open four nights a week. Meanwhile, the Branch was asked to collect books for a library, and any games they could get hold of. On the opening night they threw their doors open and invited the boys in. In the first hour they had upwards of fifty boys of all ages and, it being the first night and all four of them there, they were rather appalled

to find how difficult it was to keep order. But they managed to get through the evening somehow and when ten o'clock came and they had got rid of the boys, tired as they were, they felt they had at least saved fifty boys from an evening in the streets.

They were lucky in their search for kit and managed to find parallel bars, gloves, a horse, numerous games and a ping-pong table. The books were forthcoming in large numbers, but very few of them were suitable, and they were stacked away in an old cupboard. Club evenings went on but numbers dropped off. On his evenings there were rather more boys, but they were not very regular. The billiard cues got broken in one way or another, and the ping-pong balls were an everlasting source of expense. One or two windows were broken, and altogether it was difficult to keep going. Some of the four could not turn up on their particular nights and had hurriedly to find someone to take their place.

All this had happened the previous winter and had ended with the club closing down. Someone had brought up the subject again, but the answer was that a club had been tried and obviously the boys did not want it, and anyhow, the Branch had plenty of other things on its hands.

He was worried. He was sure the boys did want a club and he was sure a club could be run. But how? What he could not understand was where they had failed last year, because, unlike the others he was certain that the failure was due to them and not the boys. He knew clubs were run successfully in other towns, and he refused to believe that their boys differed fundamentally from those of other places.

After that first riotous evening, one of the four men had tried drilling the boys and making them abide by a ~~strict~~ programme, but that had failed. Another had picked out two boys of about seventeen and made them captains of houses, and that had failed. He had tried reasoning with the boys to get some kind of order, but that had not seemed satisfactory.

He wandered about the streets thinking the problem out, and as he wandered he saw everywhere boys, with no object in life, standing about in twos and threes. He made one or two attempts at talking to them but was not very successful, but he had seen enough in his wanderings to be fired with the resolve to put some purpose in their lives. But how to begin still puzzled him. And then, one evening, he passed a group of boys and was greeted with "When are you going to have the club again, Mister?" And without a thought he answered "To-morrow night," and added "Just you five come along."

They came, and they spent the evening talking, and he promised to find things out and start the Club on proper lines. He went to the Branch and told them that the Club must be reopened, as the boys had asked for it themselves. A Branch meeting discussed it thoroughly from many stand-points, and it was generally agreed that before anything was done, expert advice must be called in. They approached the National Association of Boys' Clubs, who sent a speaker, and their Area Secretary came with him. He showed them how fatal it was to try running the Club with a different member each night, however much that method might

appeal to the jobmaster. He quoted from Russell's *Lads' Clubs* and from personal experience of clubs which had failed through that method. He showed them that understanding and true friendship was the only basis for a club, and this was only possible with undivided leadership. He explained that the leader would need the help of other members in specific activities, and he ended by offering them access to all the fund of information at the disposal of the National Association.

Their Area Secretary explained that it would be necessary to interest non-Toc H members in the Club, and not to limit the Branch's activities to club work. He therefore warned them of the error of calling the club "The Toc H Club," which would, in the eyes of outsiders, at once limit its scope to the Branch. It was therefore agreed to call in outsiders and with them to form a Management Committee.

Our friend, strengthened by the knowledge he had gained, sought out his five friends and with them as first members, set about the formation of a Club.

III.—The Club

"OLD STREET BOYS' CLUB" in a white circle round a little blue and gold key-stone was the badge of a club that had found itself. It could look back now on four years of tradition. Already there was a talk of forming an old boys' club for those who had passed eighteen, and, though loath to relinquish their membership, realised that they must make room for new members.

In its earliest days the club had been housed in a loft over the Brewery stables in Old Street. Five of the older boys well remembered those first nights they had spent with Shortie cleaning the place out, painting and distempering and putting up shelves and pictures. They had grand pictures even in those days, in decent frames, and they still hung on the walls of the new premises.

They had started with just a few games on one night, P.T. and Boxing on another, and debates and talks on a third. Shortie was always there to the tick of seven to open the club. That's what one liked about Shortie, you could depend on him. He was always there to be appealed to and he was always ready to take an interest in a chap. Even when one tried to get his goat, he'd just reason with one and one could not go on after that.

But those early days were not all smooth. That first winter they kept the numbers down, and towards the end of the season there did not seem to be any need for that; so few turned up. Poor old Shortie was almost throwing up the sponge again, but he stuck it and somehow camp that first summer seemed to turn the tide. There were not many there but they had seven long days together and got to know each other and, of course, Shortie was just splendid.

Next winter things began well and they kept it up. Early in the season they had written to the National Association about becoming affiliated. Shortie filled up the form they sent him and they sent someone down to see the club, and the next thing they heard was that they were affiliated and belonged to the Club Movement along with hundreds of Clubs just like theirs all over the country. That was when the badge came. After this Shortie was always trying new stunts that

the National Association told him about, and one had to admit that most of them succeeded. The P.T. and Boxing was still going on, run by one of the Toc H members, and another member ran the library in a little room off the loft, which they had pushed up with pictures and easy chairs. He was great at telling a chap what to read, and he got one talking about things and arranged debates. Then a man came along one evening and talked about putting on a play. Most of the chaps cried off, but before they knew where they were pretty well the whole club was doing one thing or another for that play. Some were making scenery and swords and gadgets, while others were learning parts and, of course, the whole club sold tickets. The proceeds of the play brought in a tidy bit and they bought a horse and a punch-ball. And what was better, the chaps began clamouring for another play.

Next summer Shortie went to the Leaders' Conference of the National Association and came back full of ideas, and two of the older members went to the Boys' Conference and added still more ideas that they had got from the chaps of other clubs that were there. They thrashed all these out at camp that year and when the winter season began they had the club organized in houses with house captains and a boys' committee—and had plans for starting new activities.

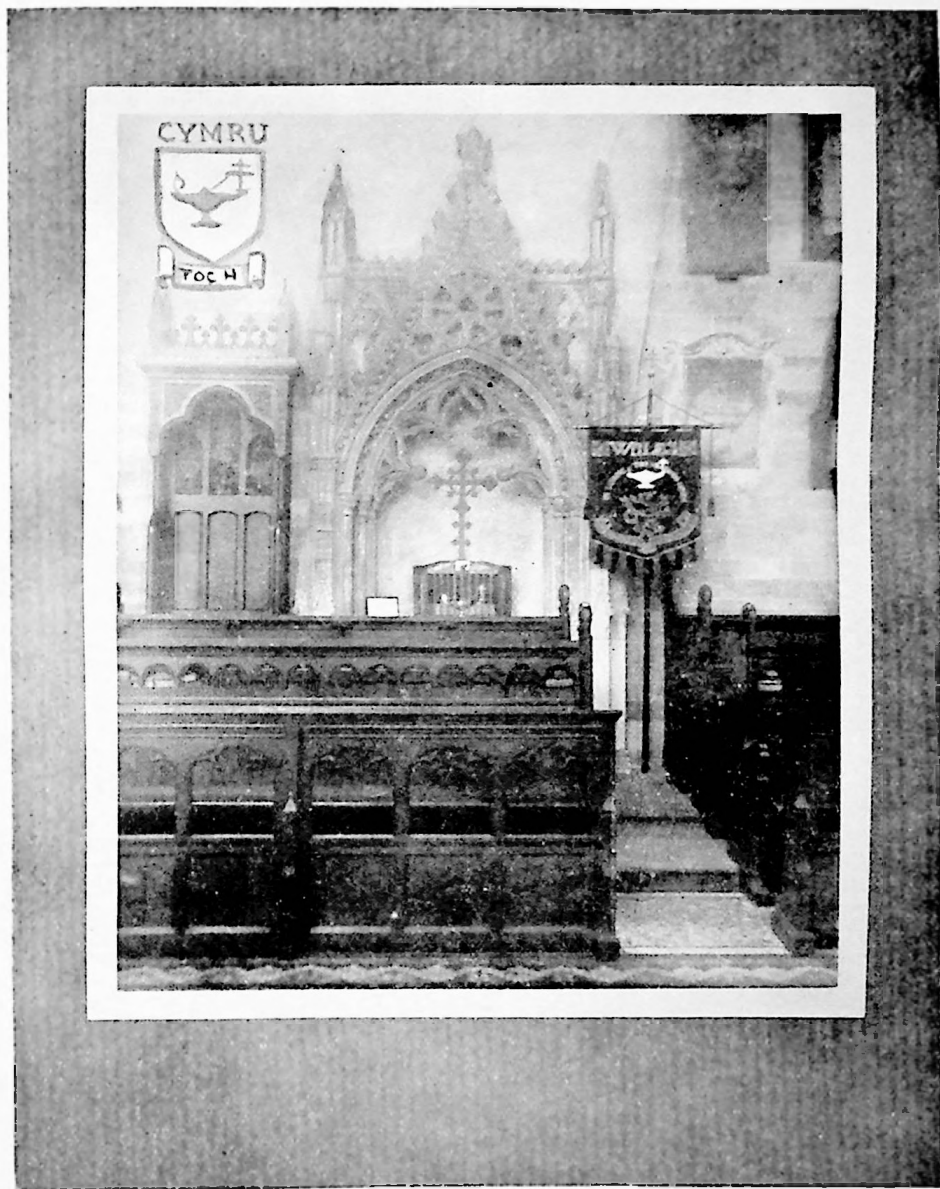
But the loft and its little room off was getting too small, though through skilful planning for different nights they managed to get a good variety of things going and they began to look round for bigger premises. Shortie had got to know the local newspaper man pretty well, and whenever they had something special on, or the football team had distinguished itself, he put a bit about the club in his paper. What with that and people asking one in the street what the badge stood for, the club was beginning to get known. One day Shortie opened the club at the usual time with his face beaming. As soon as they were fairly inside, he told them that he had been offered the old police-station for the club. It had a big room for gym. and shows and a number of smaller rooms for library, handicraft, photography and plenty of other things, besides having a sort of hall where they could have a canteen. And best of all there were proper showers instead of the dry rub-down after P.T. or Harriers, which they had had to put up with.

Of course, everyone was excited about the new premises. But when the excitement had died down, they began to look round the old room and hate the thought of leaving it. Some of them had been coming there for four years now, and even the youngsters were fond of the place.

Well, they had moved after spending a month or more painting and decorating. And now they had been there two seasons and yet were still planning new things. The latest addition was turning one of the rooms into a chapel. Their numbers had increased and some of the old boys came each night to help because Shortie was always busy, what with committee meetings, and one thing and another.

They had thought about changing the badge because the Police Station was not in Old Street, but they decided against it. It was in the old rooms that the Club had come to life and one was proud to look back on those old days and what they had meant to the club. So it's the Old Street Club and always will be.

R. T. THORNTON.



The *Silver Lamp of Wales* was given by members of Toc H and L.W.H. as a memorial to Sir SIDNEY BYASS, Bart., first Chairman of Toc H in South Wales, who passed over on February 18, 1929, and was lit by the Patron in London in December, 1929. It has since rested in Llandaff and Newport Cathedrals; it is here seen in its casket in St. Mary's Church, Swansea.



1. Hauling the Trawl—the boom, with net hanging to it, arrives.
2. Hauling the Trawl—hoisting aboard the 'pocket' containing catch.
3. The Skipper feeling the trawl rope in case of sunken wrecks.
4. . . . *"And thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line
In the offing scatterest foam. . . ."*

TRAWLING

The following experience is recorded by DEREK TYRIE, Padre of a South Country Group. It is a piece of real life—and therefore of concern to Toc H.

THE *Louise* was known locally as "a tosher." She had graduated as a fishing smack at Lowestoft after serving a long apprenticeship in the Brixham Fleet, where she had been nurtured in the eccentricities of wind and sea. She seemed a mass of muddle and nets, as I first saw her moored in the basin, while the only signs of life about her were the wisps of smoke carelessly hanging on to the galley chimney. As we clambered over the companion-way we heard voices and found the crew of three in an extremely dingy cabin where it was impossible to stretch the body. There were Charles Castleton (the skipper), Ernie and Culley, but it was Culley's cheery voice from the dark corner, where he performed the duties of chef, which said, "D'ye like greens?" There was little need for introducing ourselves further as additional members of the crew—we did like greens.

Although the day had shown promise of calm and sunshine as we nosed our way gently out of Lowestoft, it was not long before grey clouds took possession of the sky. A blustering south-westerly breeze filled the red canvas and the *Louise* soon sprang into life, as eagerly she rolled over the waves and into the hollows on her way to the fishing banks, some 25 miles out to sea.

At about 10 o'clock it was decided to "shoot the trawl." No orders were necessary once the decision had been reached. Culley and Ernie, as well as the skipper, knew their jobs and did them, with a maximum of energy and in an incredibly short time. The tiller was lashed, mainsail reefed and staysails lowered. Stout cables were coiled on deck. The net was allowed to slip over the rail and spread on the sea, while the heavy boom, 35 feet long, with its two steel runners, was unshackled from the port side. The hiss of the steam winch and the scraping of the ropes as they tautened were followed by the splash of the boom settling on the waves. The *Louise*, still rolling on the swell, now altered her course, as with a slow, crab-like crawl she drew the precious net along the bottom of the North Sea. The smoke at the galley chimney no longer tarried sluggishly, but was swept away in anxious little clouds. Culley's voice from below announced dumplings and greens, so we were soon able to lie out on the wooden benches satisfied, and secured from rolling off by slats of wood along the open side. As the stuffy atmosphere of the cabin brought on drowsiness, the voice of Charles on deck could be heard humming a dirge (or was it a lullaby?) to the catch of his imagination in the nets below the surface: I wondered as I fell asleep.

Later, the shouting of voices and the slapping of waders on the deck above awoke me to the fact that my mates had deserted their benchy bed and were hauling the trawl. The strong acetylene lamp, which was slung up for night fishing, reflected coldly on the oilskins and waterlogged deck. As I glanced over the rail, there appeared the boom, dripping and unwieldy, with its runners no longer rusty but glistening bright after their exercise along the sea bottom. When this had been secured we hauled over the thick rope to which the net was ringed and which held open the entrance to the net. Then, with fingers thrust into the meshes we

pulled in as much of the spare net as we had strength for, until the winch was needed to hoist up the "pocket." This was opened to empty its wriggling, slapping, glistening mass on the deck. Some large skate were included in the catch and about twenty pairs of good-sized sole; plaice, scawcead, one small octopus (precociously prehensile) and two lobsters were also included in the pile beneath the lamp. Charles grunted satisfaction, as much for the blessing of a whole net, as for the size of the catch. During the process of separating the fish and throwing them into baskets, we were careful to avoid an innocent-looking, coloured object about the size of a Woolworth goldfish, whose sting would enlarge a man's arm to double the size. After the quick operation of gutting and cleaning we returned to bed. There would at least be fish for breakfast.

The routine of our seven days at sea varied very slightly. When a particularly nasty-looking thunderstorm squall approached, we reefed, lashed the tiller, and retired below to await results. Twice a day the nets were lowered for about five hours at a stretch. On six occasions wrecks or rocks rent the nets so badly that in a quarter of an hour the catch has been sorted and gutted, while for two hours Culley and Ernie leant against the rail weaving new net at an incredible pace out of shuttles and tarred twine. Nor was it uncommon to see Culley leave his nets to give his hands a quick rinse in salt water before kneading the plum dough in preparation for the next meal. Sleep and meals varied with the trawling. For the rest, great care was given to the fish in the salt lockers forward, and the boat was kept as clean as possible. Conversation, arguments and back-chat accounted for much of our spare time. The Golden Age of the Fishing Industry was compared with present-day difficulties, not bitterly, although it was agreed that the North Sea was over-fished and that a 10 per cent. tariff made no difference to the foreigner who would take any price for his fish. Early days as seasick cooks on the larger smacks were remembered. Incredibility was expressed that anyone working near London should seek the privilege of a change of environment "in peace from the wild heart of clamour." It was a delight to sit yarning and smoking with these fishermen who had no room for sham or cant in their philosophy of life. They find a simple faith to guard and guide them in the dangers and hardships of their existence. They would confess to feelings of fear, but never show it. They hope their luck will warrant favourable recognition from the owner, that their ship will not meet an unwelcome sea, while a sentiment frequently mentioned is "Missus and the kids."

The sea was lashing itself into anger over the bows of the *Louise*, and a driving rain made everything sodden. The last catch had been useless and the nets again badly torn, so early on the Saturday morning it was decided to return. Without landmarks, chart, soundings or direction-finder, Charlie set a course by the rusty old compass slung near the mizzen mast. After many hours of rolling and pitching we sighted land which later merged into the familiar landmarks of Lowestoft. Some smart seamanship followed the skipper's orders. The boom with its determined thumping shook the deck as we jibbed, to bring the *Louise* round the jetty. The sails came rattling down and the bowsprit was drawn in, while a crowd of holiday-makers with silent interest watched from the breakwater.

DEREK TYRIE.

A LIMITATION OF BRANCH STATUS

TOC H, like life in general, would be a dull show if there were no ups and downs in it. Toc H is not a dull show—and the ups and downs are obvious to any impartial eye. A Group, founded with enthusiasm, may get over-confident, it may disregard the inevitable changes and chances—and then the building crashes. A new Branch, worthy of its Lamp when *first* lit, may keep the flame brightly burning for a year or two—and then fail in its trust. Sometimes the reasons for this are plain, sometimes beyond the control of the members. Success, in any case, is only comparative, and it is a mistake to think that Toc H has always succeeded through success; much oftener, it may be, the best things we have achieved have come out of failure. “Failure after long perseverance” (it has been said) “is much grander than never to have a striving good enough to be called a failure.” Branches of Toc H, like the men who compose them, grow to greatness, not by counting their past successes, but by continually believing in, loving and following illimitable ideals which can never be fully reached. And when a Branch, instead of ‘drifting,’ realises how far it is lagging behind these ideals, it often takes courage and renews its efforts. Then its ‘down’ period proves to be but temporary; lost ground is regained, new ground is won.

Branch Status not a permanent possession

Moreover, since the earliest days when Toc H, reborn in London after the War, was taking its present shape, it has been recognised that its units are not necessarily permanent. For Toc H, as Tubby has reminded us, is not a Society with a fixed form, but a Movement which is like a stream flowing and changing. The probationary unit, the Group, does not always reach its full status as a Branch, just as some probationers do not reach the point of applying for membership or qualifying for election. As everyone knows, a Branch may, if it wishes, resign its status and return its Lamp: in several instances this has been done. Or the Central and Area Executives may direct a Branch to return its Lamp and may recommend the Central Council to declare it no longer a Branch: this also has several times been deemed necessary. In some of these cases—whether of voluntary resignation or of compulsory ‘demotion’—a second effort at building a sound unit has produced something far finer than the *first*.

Every year the Central and Area Guards of the Lamp call upon Branch Executives to review their progress and report upon it. This ‘annual re-kindling,’ as it has come to be called, is not a mere piece of red-tape in which Guards of the Lamp indulge for their own satisfaction: it is an opportunity of taking stock of the position which, rightly used, means much to the Branches themselves. It should be a true touchstone of progress, vital to the welfare of the whole family.

A word about the Lamp itself. The symbol of Toc H is a Lamp not merely (as the press loves to call it) of Remembrance but of *Maintenance*. It is a Lamp to us only so long as it is maintained, so long as its light shines clearly within the Branch’s family circle and reaches outward to new men and fresh tasks. Neglected or held in slack and slovenly hands, it is but base metal. The Lamp is bestowed upon a Branch on a clear condition—that it must be maintained. It is not, and never has been from the *first*, the permanent possession of the Branch whate’er betide: each is the proud possession of Toc H as a whole and is handed into the Branch’s keeping until such time as the members may find themselves, or may be deemed to be, no longer able to maintain the trust reposed in them. Existing Branches are reminded year by year—by the lighting of new Lamps and by the ‘re-kindling’ of their own—of this trust, and should be ready, if they find

that their spirit has failed and their light grown dim, to surrender their Lamps voluntarily until they can be deservedly granted to them again.

A New Principle

For the future, Branch status will be granted for a term only. This decision has not been suddenly arrived at: it comes after discussions and suggestions which have arisen many times, over a number of years. It is now embodied in the following resolution of the Central Executive, passed on December 7, 1932:—

That the Central Executive determine that from January 1, 1933, when they grant, or confirm the grant of, Branch status to a unit, the recognition of the unit as a Branch will not be permanent, but will cease to have effect on the date in the order granting Branch status, or, where no date is specified, on December 31 in the year next but two after the calendar year in which the unit is recognised as a Branch—the unit being entitled to apply, before the period expires, for a re-grant of Branch status.

In all cases, therefore, of Groups promoted to Branch status after January 1 this year, Branch status will be granted normally for a period of between three and four years. In certain cases where it appears desirable, the status will be granted for a less period. For there are some places in which a Branch may be expected to flourish for a limited time but not to have an assured continuity—such, for instance, as a unit whose membership consists largely of soldiers liable to be moved to another station.

In most cases Branch status granted during the present year will expire on December 31, 1936. In all cases the date of expiry will be no secret: it will not only be recorded by the Central and Area Guards of the Lamp in their files but will be shown in Rolls of Lamps such as are published in Festival programmes.

Before the expiry of the period the Guard of the Lamp concerned with a Branch which is due to relinquish its status, will review the condition of the Branch: it will then either call upon the Branch to apply for a re-grant of its status (which may be made or refused), or will recommend the Central or Area Executive concerned to re-grant Branch status for a specified period (normally three years), without further enquiry.

The Position of Old Branches

Lamps were bestowed upon all Branches promoted between 1922 and 1932 without any definite limitation of the period for which they held them—though, as has been proved, Lamps could be taken away at any time from Branches which failed to maintain them worthily and the unit be deprived of Branch status. Clearly, therefore, the new principle cannot be made retrospective and cannot be compulsorily applied to the Branches founded in those first ten years. At the same time it is hoped that these older Branches will give the new principle their careful consideration and that many of them may eventually come to the decision to adopt it of their own free will. By so doing they will be putting themselves—with a touch of the 'sporting chance'—alongside their brethren in the newer Branches who will have been given no choice in the matter: "Safety last" or "To live dangerously" are good mottoes for the adventure of Toc H. More than that, they will assuredly find that the new principle acts as a stimulus to a Branch when it is tempted to rest on its oars—which implies drifting with the stream instead of keeping up the effort to reach a clear objective. The knowledge among members of a Branch that every three years they would be called upon to give an account of their stewardship of the Lamp they held, would, it is reasonable to hope, make an actual refusal to renew Branch status very rare.

TOC H AND THE UNEMPLOYED

The January JOURNAL promised that an attempt would be made this month "to survey the very various help which Toc H is giving, or might give, to the unemployed." The notes which follow are necessarily brief and incomplete, but their chief purpose is to indicate what seem to be the main and most fruitful directions for the service of Toc H, individual and corporate, in an immense and complex field.

The Prince sets the Pace

"WE meet in a time of national anxiety, but let us also say, taking strength from the past, in a time of national opportunity, when the traditions we inherit should be more than equal to the need. . . I want you to understand that we are not just facing a few months of 'grin and bear it,' but that we must get into training for a long period of work—hard work and effort, sustained despite possible discouragements. You must be prepared, as others have been before, to enlist 'for the duration,' without asking how much may in the long run be required of you. . . My appeal here is not to statesmen, nor even to philanthropists, but to all those who are in work to play the part of neighbour and friend to the man out of work. That is the open road of duty and a short cut to happiness all round. There is no central machinery that can provide a substitute for *the good neighbour*. . . The enemy to-day is depression and apathy. Let us attack them with two of our old-fashioned characteristics—good sense and good humour. I believe there are groups of unemployed here and there, dead sick of prolonged idleness, who are themselves feeling out towards ways of giving their unhired labour in co-operative effort for the help of others in need. It is up to us to back such attempts with every possible support. Get together wherever this burden lies heaviest, face up to the most urgent local need, and see if the community on the spot cannot make its own self-directed contribution towards this vast problem. So far as is humanly possible, let us break it up into little pieces and refuse to be browbeaten into paralysis by its size. . . The message that I have tried to give you is a threefold one: First, an appeal for a fresh response to national service, for a greater spirit of unselfish and adventurous helpfulness in the midst of problems which our ablest men find difficult to unravel; the second point is that the opportunity for service is at our door—in our own village, in our own town; and my third and last point is that depression and apathy are the devil's own—they are not English, so away with them!"

The PRINCE OF WALES at the Albert Hall, January 27, 1932.

"Our help is needed in a variety of tasks, in neighbourhoods where conditions vary greatly. The point is not to wait to be shown some ambitious enterprise, but to look round us and see whether there is not some simple task within our reach that we can undertake at once. We acknowledge, with gratitude, how much has been, and is being, done to better social conditions by the great public services both of the State and of Municipalities, but the kind of service I am thinking of is something humbler and less ambitious, though I am sure it is not less far-reaching. To put it simply, it consists of mutual helpfulness and individual effort. These things are open to us all, and there is no limit to what they can achieve. . . Don't be content with what has been accomplished, nor dismayed by what remains to be done. . . Our difficulties provide us with a great opportunity to show what we can do."

The PRINCE OF WALES at Newcastle, April 19, 1932.

"I want you to remember that the essence of voluntary action is the spirit of enterprise. A great deal of experimental work has been set on foot this past year, and no one who thinks that he or she has a good and new idea should be shy of putting it to the test.

Those who have convictions and the courage to initiate even a small venture may render the greatest possible service that is of the greatest value, and no should hold back for fear of failure. . . Normal employment is, of course, the real need, and we must do all in our power to provide it, but we must join with the large number that cannot, for the moment, be absorbed, in discovering new and constructive uses for unoccupied time. The causes of unemployment are beyond our individual control, and we may differ in our estimate of them, but it is largely in our power to control the effects of unemployment and our aims must be practical and not theoretical."

The PRINCE OF WALES, broadcasting on January 6, 1933.

"I have visited several depressed areas during the year and I have been able to see the lead that Toc H has given, and the new opportunity they have seized in many places. . . I call upon Toc H to help even still more these people—to help them to take heart, to disown discouragement, and, especially, to feel that they are not cast off. . . Toc H is pledged to service: and the word service by itself is somewhat vague. I would remind you that all those who were glad to find Talbot House in Poperinghe were not merely on service but on 'Active Service.' I feel that it is in the spirit of 'On Active Service' that we should face our tasks for the New Year, 1933."

The PRINCE OF WALES at the Birmingham Festival, December 3, 1932.

The Line of Approach for Toc H

It is worth while to stress once again certain general principles which Toc H has to bear in mind in its approach to this, as to any other, social problem. Toc H is not a Government Department, an Employment Exchange or a Distress Committee; it must never attempt to usurp the functions of a public authority or to compete with other voluntary agencies by setting up rival schemes to those already operating. Everywhere its job is to provide a reinforcement of men for work which is going on, or, where there is obvious need for new work, men who can initiate it, with all the allies they can gather round them.

Certain other general points are well made in a memorandum circulated from the office of one Toc H Area to members of the Area Executive, District Officers and Branch and Group Jobmasters. We cannot do better than quote from it:—

"In the first place, it is clear that Toc H as a movement cannot, as a whole, commit itself to any one scheme or plan that might be devised to meet the present situation—even if a way could be seen to deal with a problem which has long baffled the best brains in the country. . .

"Secondly, in any local scheme that a particular unit may have a share in organising, let us be very certain indeed that a real need is being wisely met. It may be a pleasant salve to our consciences to be able to feel that at any rate we are doing something; let us be sure that there is more in it than that. In recent numbers of the JOURNAL several excellent schemes in which Toc H has played a part, have been described. Each of these was designed to meet a special set of circumstances and conditions in a particular locality. To reproduce them in a locality where conditions are quite different may be to court disaster. The problems of the Rhondda Valley are not the problems of London, nor can they be faced by the same methods. . .

"It may be thought that there is little which we in this Area can do. The Area staff do not believe this to be the case. They are convinced that, just as the Old House played no small part in keeping up the *morale* of troops in the Salient during the darkest days of the War, so Toc H to-day can and must play a similar part and by much the same methods.

It was the *fellowship* of Talbot House that sent men back to the line stiffened and encouraged; it is by the gift of fellowship that Toc H to-day must try to help its unemployed brothers to disown discouragement. Let us during this winter do our very utmost to see to it that a sprinkling of unemployed men are regular and welcome visitors at our Guest-nights. Let us see to it that our Guest-nights are such that they will care to come. Even to be asked to do a job of service may be just what is needed to restore a man's self-confidence and to assure him of his continued place in, and value to, the community. All this is not going to be easy, but it is not impossible if the Toc H Guest-night can be made everywhere once more a true 'Everyman's Club,' with its doors open to visitors of every sort and kind. Essentially, the need is for the kind of neighbourliness to which our Patron referred last January in the Albert Hall. . ."

Finally, let us stress again one point which is clearly made in the foregoing. Whatever Toc H members do for the unemployed, whether in working with other bodies in existing schemes or initiating schemes of their own, forethought and imagination are needed at the outset and all the time. The condition of chronic unemployment on a large scale in a town which depends on one or two depressed staple industries may call for new ideas of many kinds, and local Toc H may have them: if so let it use them boldly. In London, for instance, on the other hand there is no staple industry but a little of every trade. Men there are less apt to be out of work for years on end, with no obvious prospect of better times, but are often in and out of employment in turns. Here it is felt that the best work Toc H units can do is to concentrate mainly on individuals and "more personally to emphasize the challenge to our fellowship with which the presence of our unemployed neighbour continually confronts us." To 'leap with joy' into a scheme, however attractive in itself, which does not fit local conditions, may be only to confuse still further the confused problem of unemployment.

Co-operation with other Bodies

The number of societies which are working, directly or indirectly, to help the unemployed is so great that the willing volunteer may well be baffled at the outset. He wants to know plainly what the special needs are and where he is most wanted. Fortunately, there are agencies which survey the whole field and try to co-ordinate the great variety of work which is going on in it. *The Christian Social Council* (32, Gordon Square, W.C.1), viewing unemployment not merely as a social and economic problem but as an intensely human tragedy which reproaches Christians and demands their service to their fellows as to God Himself, has undertaken practical work in many places through its local Councils of Christian Churches. In a pamphlet published last year (*For the Unemployed*, 3d.) a number of such schemes then in operation were described. The Council has also tried to give a lead in the Christian study of the economics of unemployment. *This Unemployment: Disaster or Opportunity?* written for the Council by V. A. Demant (Student Movement Press, 1931, 2s. 6d.), is a remarkable little book which Toc H members have already been urged to study (see *JOURNAL*, November, 1931, p. 463; December, 1931, p. 487). A pamphlet, *The Churches and the Unemployed*, 3d.) gives an analysis of the book, a scheme of study, and a list of books on the subject.

As members already know, the body which organised the great meeting in the Albert Hall in London on January 27 last year, at which the Prince of Wales made his appeal for personal service, was the *National Council of Social Service*. That meeting, which was broadcast to a number of other big gatherings all over the country, was the signal for the opening of a sustained campaign for personal service to which Toc H has contributed its share. Our Headquarters was concerned, with many other societies, in the preparations

for the Albert Hall meeting, and many units took their part, to a greater or lesser extent, in the organising of 360 local meetings in connection with the Prince's appeal. Since then Toc H, as a whole, has co-operated in many places with other voluntary bodies in service, old and new, which the appeal was designed to encourage. The National Council of Social Service has now been chosen by the Government to be the main channel of voluntary service in connection with unemployment and has received a grant of public money. The Prince of Wales has followed up his first speech in the Albert Hall by visiting many distressed areas with officials of the N.C.S.S. to see conditions for himself, and, as the Council's patron, has addressed meetings in several places. On January 6 this year he spoke to wireless listeners on unemployment, in introduction to a weekly series of broadcast talks, entitled *S.O.S.*, which are to be given by Mr. S. P. B. Mais; in his speech he stressed the position of the N.C.S.S. in dealing with the whole problem. Clearly, therefore, it is the duty of Toc H to keep in constant touch with the N.C.S.S. and to work with it closely.

The N.C.S.S. published last year the text of the Prince's Albert Hall speech (see also JOURNAL, March, 1932), and a pamphlet *Work with the Unemployed* (see JOURNAL, May, 1932, p. 196). It has now produced another pamphlet which is especially valuable and should be in the hands of our District Officers, jobmasters and others without delay. This is entitled *Unemployment and Opportunity: Some practical suggestions*. It is excellently illustrated; its price is 6d. It gives examples of what can be, and is being done, under five heads, viz., (a) the development of *occupation centres*; (b) the establishment of *physical training courses*; (c) the cultivation of *allotments*; (d) the increase of *public amenities*; and (e) the growth of *educational activities*. It is to be noticed that *Relief* does not figure in this list, for it lies outside the scope of the N.C.S.S.

* * * *

Probably the most useful thing we can do in the pages which follow is to give (mentioning no names) some actual instances of what Toc H is doing, or helping to do, in various directions to lend a hand to the unemployed.

Relief

Relief is the concern not only of public authorities, but of innumerable individuals and societies. It is safe to say that no unit or member of Toc H or L.W.H. is unconcerned at some point with relieving distress due to unemployment. Casual and indiscriminate giving of pence or pounds is continually a temptation to all of us, and is often scarcely avoidable. It may rescue an honest man at a critical moment—or it may merely give a cadger's career a new lease of life. To set to work to find out the facts about a man who asks for relief (or, still more, the man who needs it but will not ask) and to give it in the best way often needs much time and patience—and we may have little of either. Some units (and no doubt many individual members) are tackling the giving of relief in the form of work, goods or money with thought, courage and skill. Two examples may suffice—one to illustrate a comprehensive scheme, the other the treatment of a particular case.

(1) *A comprehensive scheme*: One Group, mainly composed of working men, in the South of England, disturbed by the fact that no special preparations seemed to be made to meet the unemployment which they saw coming in the winter, carefully prepared a scheme which they took to the Mayor of the town. He accepted it and called an Unemployment Committee into existence; this Committee requested the Toc H Group to undertake the organising of their scheme, which was as follows:—

(a) The Mayor sent out a letter to every householder (10,000) in the Borough, asking for a minimum subscription of 6d. per week, the proceeds to be used to provide

work for the unemployed on two days a week. The work to be of public utility, to be carried out under the supervision of the Borough Engineer, who would draw up plans of work. (A minimum of 5,000 subscribers of 6d. per week was aimed at. Thus, it was reckoned, £500 per month could be collected and 125 per week be employed).

- (b) Two hundred voluntary collectors were, with the help of churches and societies, enrolled. They first canvassed every street (there are 650 in the Borough) to follow up the Mayor's appeal, and thereafter collected, week by week, the subscriptions. For convenience the Borough (eight by five miles in area) was divided into 11 districts, each with its own treasurer, responsible to the Hon. Treasurer of the Fund. Cards in duplicate are held by contributors and collectors and these are initialled mutually at the time each subscription is paid. (The Toc H Group undertook all the initial clerical work—they listed the roads, apportioned them, card-indexed the collectors, issued the collecting cards, made complete lists for treasurers, distributed posters, etc.).
- (c) The results for the ~~first~~ three months of working are: approximately £1,500 collected; work given for three eight-hour days a week, at 1s. 0½d. an hour, to 520 men. (The men are employed through the Employment Exchange, and the Fund stamps their cards).

The work undertaken includes laying out Pleasure Grounds and a Playing Field for an Elementary School, making a nursery garden for Public Gardens, Road Repairs, etc.

It has been found necessary to open an office of the Fund in the Municipal Buildings, where it is proposed to employ unemployed clerks, with Toc H volunteers after office hours.

Other examples of relief through work, organised by Toc H, could be quoted. A Branch in a West Country town, undaunted by the breakdown, through the failure of the unemployed men's committee, of a centre they had started, and by apathy on the part of the general public, persuaded the Chairman of the Urban District Council to form an 'Employment and Opportunity' Committee. They issued a house-to-house appeal, with a reply-paid postcard, to townspeople to give jobs of work (a great variety were specified) *now* to unemployed men. Failing the offer of private jobs, any money contributed was to be applied to necessary public works by unemployed. The result of this appeal is not yet to hand.

It is to be noted that such schemes for collecting money and giving work, organised by volunteers, are *only likely to be effective* in smaller towns where the proportion of the unemployed population is not specially high. In an area of extreme distress, like the coalfields of South Wales or Durham or in a great industrial city which is hard-hit, such a scheme may be out of the question.

As an instance of enterprise in giving relief by work on a small scale we might quote the employment, on an estate in Kent, of ten unemployed men, all members of Toc H or the British Legion, on felling 'valueless' timber. They are paid 10d. an hour, plus breakfast and dinner; they cut logs which are sold for firewood at 2s. 6d. a sack, the money all going to their food and wages. The good effect of this job on their health and happiness is noted.

(2) *A Particular Case*: Some units have taken great pains over the distribution to individuals and families of relief in money, food or clothing. In a North Wales town, for instance (to quote a local newspaper): "Toc H this season reached every deserving family it knew of. Over 100 parcels of provisions were taken out by its members, several

tons of coal were delivered and anything up to three hundredweight of discarded clothes found its way into unfortunate homes." At Christmas time many units collected, made up and distributed parcels (in one instance about 600 in number), personally but anonymously, to necessitous families. As an example, in detail, of how a small sum can be spent to advantage, the following case will serve:—

In response to a suggestion in an article (*The Christmas Dinner*) in the December JOURNAL, one reader, a lady in Scotland, sent the Editor £1, requesting that it should be used to provide a happy Christmas for someone out of work. The Editor handed it on to a certain Area, which passed it to a certain Branch, which expended it on a family consisting of father, mother and three children, aged 17, 14 and 12. Here is the report of the 'nominator' (a local doctor): "This family is reported by the County Council as starving. Husband is stone deaf, an expert engineer but cannot get work. Eldest daughter, aged 17 years, moral defective, is hoping to be admitted into a M.D. Home at — in January. The father cannot obtain any relief until the daughter has been admitted. The son, aged 12 years, is getting work at 12s. per week early in the New Year. On calling on Christmas Eve I found them in a very cold and miserable condition. They had no coal at all; their midday dinner was on the table, consisting of bread and margarine only. A letter of thanks from Mrs. L. stated that she bought the following articles with the 10s. given in cash:

	s.	d.
2 cwt. coal	4	8
1 Jumper	3	11½
Stockings	1	3
	<hr/>	
	9	10½

Toc H sent a parcel of food to the value of 10s., plus other food given by local residents, as follows:

	s.	d.		s.	d.
1lb. Tea	11		1 pkt. Dates		5
1lb. Sugar	2½		4lbs. Christmas Pudding	3	6
1lb. Butter	10½		1 tin Sweets		5
1 tin Baked Beans	4		1 box Crackers		7½
1lb. Jam	5		1 tin Sardines		8½
7lbs. Forehock	3	6			
			Total	11	11½
Extras: 1 pkt. "Force"			given		
8lbs. Turkey			"		
1 Cake			"		

This, by the way, was a typical parcel sent, without extras, to every family of 6 to 8 persons; 219 such parcels were delivered on Christmas Eve to the poor of the district, every case being personally known."

If it be objected (by those who enjoyed their own Christmas dinner as a matter of course) that the instance given is in the nature of a special 'stunt,' it does at least illustrate the care and the personal touch of neighbourliness which should characterise all relief administered by Toc H.

Occupation Centres

The object of the 'Occupation Centres,' which are springing up all over the country, is two-fold. First, the repair or provision by the unemployed of things needed by themselves or others—work which, under present conditions of scarcity, would otherwise not be done at all. In this connection it is specially important to make sure (in the words of Mr. Lansbury's foreword to the N.C.S.S. pamphlet on *Unemployment and Opportunity*)

that "there is no competition with ordinary employment. The mending of clothes and boots is done for themselves and would go undone but for the organised effort to provide the opportunity. Neither is there any question of sending out partially trained men to undercut trained men in the labour market."

Secondly, the effect on the unemployed workers themselves is no less—if not more—important. To quote Mr. Lansbury again, "the proper use of the powers of mind and body which ordinary industry, as now organised, cannot use, are utilised in order that men may preserve their self-respect." It does not need much imagination to understand the effect of idle hands made busy once more on constructive work, depressed minds given an absorbing interest, pride in one's own skill re-awakened, the comradeship of fellow-workers restored, the sense that one is still needed somewhere re-affirmed.

Toc H units and members are concerned in a great number of Occupation Centres. In some cases they are co-operating in an effort organised by a local committee or another society; in other cases Toc H has taken the initiative in forming the centre and either continues to control it or is working with some representative body to which it has handed the management over. Among the great number of cases of which reports or newspaper cuttings have reached Headquarters, it is not easy to select two or three examples only. The following, varying in their scope and in local conditions, may suffice to illustrate this kind of work:—

1. *In a big Scottish city:* The reading of the N.C.S.S. pamphlet *Work with the Unemployed* was the stimulus for this effort. To quote from the later N.C.S.S. pamphlet, *Unemployment and Opportunity*—"Members of the local Branch of Toc H inaugurated a centre by arranging a meeting with ten unemployed men to consider what was possible. A second meeting was held in the following week with some of the prominent men in the city and, in the meantime, assistance had been promised by the Education Authority. It was decided to open a workshop and recreation room, and an appeal was sent to sixty people asking for £1 from each with which to start the scheme. £50 was received, of which £20 was used for the necessary repairs to a building which had been made available for the purpose" (this was found and given, rent free, by the Branch). "The Education Authority loaned two joiners' benches, equipped with vices, and £70 worth of tools, which were sufficient for all types of work contemplated; the rest of the £50 was used to buy materials, but a small balance was kept in hand. The centre was opened on August 29, 1932, with an attendance of 15 men. By September 22—less than a month later—the membership had grown to 139" (the latest report received at H.Q. says that it is now "380 men, covering all trades in this city"). "In this short space of time the work done by the men included:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 4 Forms and 2 Tables for Recreation Room. | 1 Kitchen Sideboard. |
| 2 Cupboards for Canteen (which the men themselves run). | 2 Medicine Chests. |
| 6 Wireless Cabinets. | 1 First-Aid Box. |
| 2 Radio-Gramophone Cabinets. | 4 Oak Kerbs. |
| 1 Kitchen Table. | 3 Model Aeroplanes. |
| | 1 Model Speedboat, 4ft. long. |

There were also in hand 18 Bedside Lockers and a Wardrobe for the local Royal Infirmary, and forms and tables for a Boys' Club. Part of the raw material was given by shops and warehouses which sent packing cases and odd lengths of wood. As is clear from the output of work, the rooms are always crowded during the day and on the three nights a week when they are open. It is only the lack of accommodation which has prevented the centre from dealing with double the numbers."

The principle of 'Self-Help' in the running of the centre is important. To quote from the Branch's interim report on their work: "The management of the scheme is vested primarily in Toc H, a sub-committee of which controls its financial side. A Welfare Committee, composed of 15 unemployed men elected by the men themselves, arranges for supervision of the workshop during the daytime and two practical joiners are in charge of the arrangements for work done. An Executive Committee of five men were detailed by the Welfare Committee to act in cases of emergency, and have powers to decide all matters, subject to consultation with the Toc H Hon. Secretary and organiser of the scheme. The men also run a dry canteen at which a cup of tea and one roll, or other cake, can be obtained, price one penny; this canteen is managed by a separate committee and has been run, so far, at a small profit. The material used by the men for woodwork is purchased for a nominal sum, and two practical joiners are responsible for cutting and pricing the wood required for each job. The idea of making a charge for the wood is to obviate the 'something for nothing' feeling which is considered detrimental to the *morale* of the men concerned."

Unfair competition with ordinary industry is also guarded against. The report says: "A boot and shoe repairing workshop has also been opened, and here again material is sold to men requiring repairs at a price well within their limited means. In this latter work, personal investigation is made in each case to prevent persons who are in a position to pay for the repair of their boots and shoes getting the work done at a rate which would compete unfairly with local tradesmen. . . None of the work is sold for profit, and it has been found very necessary to have effective supervision to prevent any possibility of work done in the workshop by an individual being sold over again to an outsider."

Recreation and religion are provided for: "The men are free to come and go as and when they like. The workshop is open from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. daily. In addition a Recreation Room is provided with books and magazines, and games such as draughts and dominoes." From October onwards a religious service on the premises, to be taken in rotation by local ministers throughout the winter, has been arranged.

2. *In a small Yorkshire town*: The local Toc H Group was instrumental in setting up a Town Committee; it obtained available premises (an old Army hut in an acre of land) and handed them over to a Committee of the unemployed. The unemployed rapidly put the hut into good order, with the usual facilities, prepared and sowed the land, erected a glass-house and installed a small boiler in it. Cobbling and carpentry shops were also started. In a short time they were clamouring for further facilities, and part of the local Iron Works (the closing down of which had caused most of the unemployment in the place) was taken over. An instructor was found, a School of Art agreed to help, and a number of men are now working wrought iron. Further land has been obtained and a ready market is found for wrought iron gates and garden produce. The money thus obtained is turned back to buy more raw material and more seeds, and it appears within the bounds of possibility that within a very short time work will have been provided for a considerable proportion of the local unemployed.

3. *In a small East Anglian country town*, described as "of the sleepiest kind": this itself makes the success of the effort noteworthy. The local Group wrote to the Clerk of the Urban District Council offering their man-power to help the unemployed, and inviting support and suggestions. The letter also invited the members of the Council to attend a Group meeting at which two representatives of the Industrial Christian Fellowship were to describe their own experience, one successful, the other unsuccessful, with centres in two different towns. The Council attended in force and, admitting that it had

never considered the idea of such a centre, pledged itself to support any concrete proposals made by the Group. The Vicar was present and afterwards offered the use of his Church House on mornings and afternoons. A Sub-Committee was appointed and met representatives of the unemployed; six unemployed men were then co-opted on the Sub-Committee and now act as stewards of the centre. The Sub-Committee continues to meet weekly. The room is now open, in addition to day-times, on two nights a week, when the Group provides members to supervise: at intervals the whole Group attends in force for tournaments, musical evenings, etc. "Unfortunately" (says the report), "no members are able to attend regularly during the day, and occasionally one or two of the local 'bad hats' stage a minor riot which immediately dissolves on the appearance of a Toc H member who is fetched from his neighbouring business"!

The desire expressed by the unemployed originally was for a 'Rest Room' and this is not yet, in the full sense, an Occupation Centre. The provision of games and reading and writing material, however, led to a spontaneous desire to do manual work. The men themselves offered to redecorate the room, and undertook repairs to sixteen chairs and five tables, and to locks and bolts, etc. Some carpentry for an Orphanage has been done, and it is hoped to obtain use of the room for practising crafts. One of the unemployed is now a member, another a probationer of Toc H—"both very stout fellows."

Many other instances of Toc H co-operation, and often initiative, in Occupation Centres could be given. On Tees-side, 15 members of one unit signed a guarantee through a building society and purchased a disused cinema for the centre: their special intention is to help revive the local fishing industry. In a Midland Cathedral town the local Branch offered their own headquarters to the Mayor as a Centre; a Joint Committee was formed, under the chairmanship of the Manager of the Labour Exchange; a paid Warden is engaged; and 40-100 men at a time are to be found at work in the Centre. In a small Midland town the visit of a curate to two neighbouring units, where he appealed for help, resulted in the formation of a Centre, where boot repairing is undertaken and sign-writing: all the notices at the Birmingham Birthday Festival and in many local Toc H rooms have been produced there—work which would otherwise not have been commissioned for pay but done by members at odd moments. In a Lancashire city five padres of different denominations (one is on the staff of Toc H) took over a disused clothes factory, "derelict and dirty beyond belief," collected a squad of unemployed men who put it in order in a fortnight and opened a Centre. In a neighbouring great city most of the units of Toc H are in some degree, often very fully indeed, concerned in the work of various Occupation Centres. In a town in Kent a Centre, organised by a joint committee representing the Town Council, the clergy, the Unemployed Workers' Association, and local societies, including Toc H, provides not only facilities for cobbling and carpentry, as well as classes, lectures and recreation, but has embarked on the baling of waste-paper to enable unemployed men to contribute part of the running expenses. There is a ready demand, at a good price, for baled waste-paper; a millboard firm has lent an expert hand to supervise; the 'raw material' is to be collected by the men on a roster system. Many other examples, varying in detail and drawn from places with very different conditions, could be quoted.

Recreation and Physical Training

An urgent and elementary need of men out of work, especially where severe unemployment has reigned long, perhaps for four or five years, is to be recalled from the listlessness and apathy which get good men down, into cheerfulness, interest and hope. It is very natural that Toc H members, knowing well the value to themselves of the fellowship which they have experienced at their own 'family' meetings and guest-nights and having had

some practice in passing this spirit on to others in boys' clubs and other corporate jobs, should often choose the running of a Recreation Room for the unemployed as their form of help. This work has obvious advantages—it can be done in evening hours when members who are in work have leisure, as well as by day; it does not require the outlay on equipment and materials, nor the technical knowledge which an Occupation Centre demands; and its effect on the depressed spirits of the men who attend is immediately seen. It also has disadvantages which, unless definite steps are taken to guard against them, make themselves felt as the job proceeds. A room which is opened for go-as-you-please recreation attracts a good many men who prefer to be idle and are apt to be undisciplined—especially if it provides something for nothing. The best remedy for this is a carefully-planned and active programme, in which there are not only games at will and organised competitions, but a regular proportion of classes for training body and mind, which men must attend to some definite extent if they wish to enjoy the other facilities of the place.

A second very real danger is that a 'Recreation Room for the Unemployed' tends to segregate men who are out of work through no fault of their own, from their fellows. They come to be looked upon as a class apart, objects of pity, sometimes even of suspicion, by those outside: any such feeling pushes a man yet deeper into his misfortune instead of raising him above it. It is as though Toc H had continued to be (what in its earliest stages it naturally was) a club of ex-service men, unmixed with the normal post-war world. One remedy for this would seem to be to make the evenings in a room for the unemployed into real Toc H guest-nights, when employed members and their friends mix freely and without distinction with their unemployed fellows and take part in all activities together. *Unemployment in itself should not be the qualification* which entitles a man to belong to a club—for it is, so to speak, an accident and not the true measure of the man.

The Recreation Room, opened in times of emergency, may well remain when times change—as Talbot House outlived the War. What was at first a port of call for men hard-pressed may be put on a permanent footing as a club for the same men in better fortune and for others—just as Talbot House in Poperinghe with its war-time visitors has developed into a world-wide family with a regular membership. As the Prince said "our difficulties provide us with a great opportunity": may we not be able to found a fellowship with men in times of special adversity which will endure in permanent forms when the first urgent need is over?

Such ventures, in many of which Toc H is concerned, may be found in various stages. Some are 'Rest' or 'Recreation' places, pure and simple, for all-comers among the unemployed; others have an active programme and a regular membership; others have introduced educational classes, physical training and some kind of handicraft; some have organised these occupations so far that they are becoming, or have become, true Occupation Centres. A few instances, from Toc H experience, may be given:

(1) *A "Rest Room"* in an East Anglian country town. The local Branch held a rummage sale to start a benevolent fund, which realised £10; voluntary contributions from individuals and other societies in the town have kept this replenished. They now open their Branch Room on three mornings a week, with Toc H members in charge, to the unemployed. At 11 a.m. a cup of coffee and one 'fag' is given to each man: members of Toc H undertake to supply a daily or weekly paper, milk, sugar and cigarettes. There is an average attendance each morning of 30-35 men—"they are a splendid lot, and appreciate what is done." The Branch reports that criticisms have been made, "but a little faith has gone a long way."

(2) *A Club—with programme and membership.* Within 48 hours of hearing the Prince's appeal, a Midland unit had formed an 'Unemployed Club' in its own headquarters. The

Club is open daily from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and from 2 to 5.30 p.m. The membership has amounted to 100, and there is a waiting list of about 25. There are very few rules, and what there are have been formulated by the men themselves. The committee consists of five Toc H members and three unemployed men. A free cup of tea, supplemented on Fridays by a bun, is given daily to each club member. Games (billiards, draughts, dominoes, skittles, etc.) are provided and knock-out competitions in all these are organised; whist drives are held, with nominal prizes; a monthly concert, organised and presented by the men themselves, takes place; gymnastic apparatus is used freely. Some anonymous friends of Toc H have made themselves responsible for the expenses of the Club, so that the Branch need not on this account curtail its other ordinary activities. The Prince of Wales visited the Club last summer and watched keenly a boxing display in the loft upstairs.

(3) *Education and Physical Training.* Many instances could be quoted of efforts by units to promote classes, in Clubs or as a separate venture. In a Lancashire seaside town the local Branch put far-reaching proposals to the Citizens' Unemployment Committee and accepted the charge of the Committee to carry them through. They appealed for a number of premises, rent free, for use as centres; not only for furniture and games for these but for books and technical journals and for men or women who could give lectures or take classes in literature, art, the drama, physical training and hobbies. A local newspaper backed this with an appeal for gramophones and records. A Clydeside Branch has organised physical training classes, held every afternoon, and has opened a reading room from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 2 to 4 p.m. Another Scottish unit convened a meeting of the unemployed and enlisted men to attend classes and make allotments. The Group approached the Town Council for facilities and were given by them the use of a factory building and of vacant ground, which proved too small for the number of applicants and led to a further search for suitable land.

In these ventures many allies are available. Education Authorities can, and do, provide lecturers and instructors, and also gymnasiums, gymnastic equipment, shoes, etc. Regiments and clubs have come forward with qualified instructors for physical training. In one small town in the south, where there was no public library, unemployed men of some education, clerks and tradesmen, found the hospitality of the Y.M.C.A. premises, with books and so on, a great boon: the Society of Friends paid the Y.M.C.A. subscription for men nominated by the manager of the Labour Exchange.

(4) *The use of 'Hiking.'* An interesting scheme for the unemployed is being put into operation by the Youth Hostels Association, and its first series of experiments are to be carried out at once in connection with the members of a large club for the unemployed in the Home Counties, organised by local Toc H, which is keenly backing the Y.H.A. scheme. The aim of the scheme is to give unemployed men both education and physical training, in the broad sense. By arrangement with the Ministry of Labour, which has viewed the idea sympathetically from the outset, small parties of selected unemployed men (six is a good number), under a competent leader, who may be a Y.H.A. member or one of themselves, are to be invited to do an eight-day 'hike.' They will be accommodated at the end of each day's march of 15-20 miles in one of the hostels belonging to the Association. They will be expected, out of their unemployment pay, to defray the bare cost of meals, which they are encouraged to cook for themselves; they will not be charged the usual 1s. a night in the hostel for a bed, but may contribute something if they wish. Arrangements are being made for local residents or Y.H.A. members in each place to show them points of interest and give regular talks on the history or natural history, etc., of the country they will see in the next day's march. They will do the necessary house work of the hostel before leaving it, and some may care to pay for their lodging by doing

odd repairs and bits of fatigue work while there. Singing and discussion of all kinds go without saying. The men will be exempt during their trek from reporting at the Exchange and in certain cases arrangements will be made for them to draw their pay at an Exchange *en route*. The main aim is strenuous physical exercise in the open air, the widening of minds in danger of growing stale, and the fostering of fellowship between the members of the party and all whom they meet on the road. Four such parties in connection with this one Club are already arranged; their final objective, like Chaucer's pilgrims, is Canterbury. The scheme is being taken up by the Y.H.A. all over the country. Toc H can co-operate further (apply to the Youth Hostels Association, 18, Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts.).

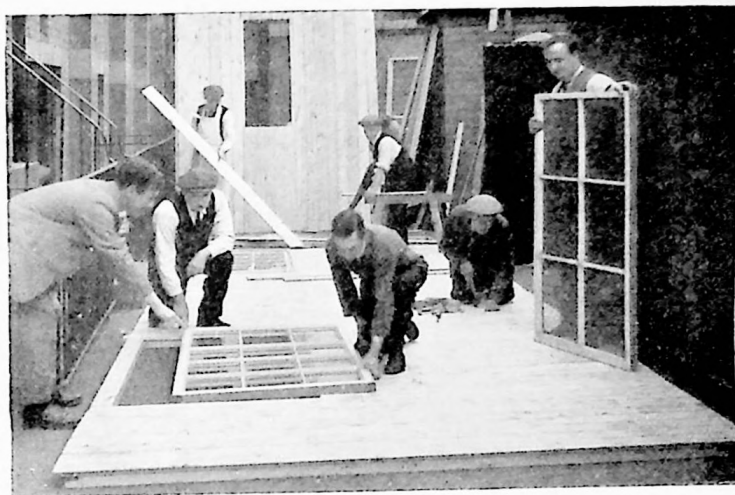
Allotments

Wherever it is practicable, occupation out of doors has great natural advantages. It is not a mere fancy of the drawing-room poet that bringing a man in close touch with living, growing things, with the soil and with the weather, holds for him health of body and healing power for the mind. In the heart of great industrial cities this is usually out of the question, but it is more often possible for town-dwellers than most people imagine. During the war people learnt to plant potatoes in back yards; a row of beans will grow within easy reach of factory smoke and rubbish tips can be made to blossom like the rose. "In Sheffield, by June last, 1,630 plots, covering 102 acres, were being cultivated by unemployed men. In Hull, 550 were at work. In the whole country about 62,000."

The encouragement of allotments for the unemployed has been part of the scheme in several of the instances of Toc H work given earlier; it is the main concern in a number of other cases. The chief initiative for this work comes, as is widely recognised, from the Society of Friends and its well-proved service in South Wales and other areas. There is no need to go into the matter in detail here, for an article on "Allotments for the Unemployed" was contributed to the JOURNAL last month by the Friends' Allotments Committee (Friends' House, Euston Road, N.W.1) and information from them is available on application: they have, for instance, published a leaflet of "Suggestions for Toc H members." Here is work which stimulates both body and mind, which calls forth the team spirit and a healthy rivalry, and which gives a man the deep satisfaction of practical achievement—food on the family table, through the effort of his own hands and not out of a tin.

Reclamation of Waste Land

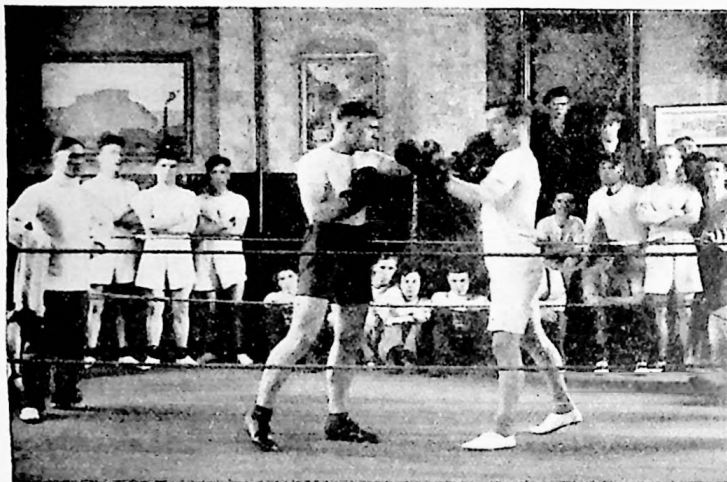
The reclamation of waste land demands a word. What the Miners' Welfare Committee and the Quakers have shown possible in South Wales is pretty widely known—public gardens and paddling pools laid out on bare and useless ground, a slag-pit converted into a swimming pool, a steep and stony mountain slope levelled into a much-needed football field. Of the last-mentioned job, initiated by members of a boys' club and their unemployed friends, it is said: "A curious fact about the scheme was that no one could ever be found who was 'in charge.' Those who carried out the work did so without any apparent controlling authority, giving their work in spontaneous and unfettered co-operation." A fine characteristic of this kind of work, which Toc H might well encourage in many places where it has not yet been thought of, is that it can involve the whole community—the Local Authorities, the landowner, the citizen who can contribute money or tools or expert advice, the volunteer of all classes, whether unemployed or otherwise. And the result is not a passing benefit to the unemployed worker but a permanent gift to the whole community.



BUILDING THEIR OWN CENTRE.



BOOT REPAIRING.



PHYSICAL TRAINING.



THE ALLOTMENT WORKER'S HARVEST.

*(The blocks on these pages have been kindly lent by the
National Council of Social Service.)*

Boys' Work; Clubs and Camps

The heaviest incidence of unemployment, as a whole, is not upon 'juveniles.' In the more fortunate places unemployment among boys scarcely presents more of a problem now than it did in the prosperous pre-war days—for every manager of a boys' club, for instance, knows that he will have to deal at any time with the difficulties of a certain proportion of his boys who are out of a job. In the areas which are hardest hit, however, the tragedy of great numbers of boys standing idle, without having done a day's work since leaving school and with no obvious prospect of ever doing one, is so apparent that 'something **must** be done about it.' The foundation of many new boys' clubs is naturally the most immediate answer. A 'Club for Unemployed Boys' is open at once to the objection which we have noticed in the case of Clubs or Recreation Rooms for unemployed men—it brands them as a class apart, bearing a vague stigma in many people's minds for being in a condition which is certainly not their own fault. Most of the Clubs are in reality clubs for *poor* boys (though we hope they never bear that name)—boys from homes which know constant poverty and are probably overshadowed by the unemployment of the chief wage-earner. A more or less constant shortage of food, clothing and comfort, a lack of space and of discipline at home, are likely to be the boys' chief troubles for which the club has to compensate as best it can. There is no need to describe here the methods by which Boys' Clubs, the Brigades and the Scouts try to do this (see, for instance, *I Serve*, a pamphlet on boys' work issued by Toc H in connection with the Prince's appeal, 2d.). In short, work among boys ought to be the same in bad times as in good—except that the extension of it is now more urgently needed than ever. (See also the article on p. 58).

Camps, at week-ends and for a week or more in summer, have always been an almost inseparable part of all boys' work and, for the boy himself, the crown of the whole year. 'Camp,' with its disciplined freedom, regular hours and food and exercise, does wonders for any boy, but by itself, *i.e.*, unless linked up with a Club or Company or Troop which carries the same team through the rest of the year, it is a good start which is not followed up and is thus largely thrown away. This is at present true of a good many excellently organised camps for unemployed boys: the sustained effort to hold them together before and after is still lacking.

One or two instances of Boys' Clubs and Camps, out of the many in which Toc H is concerned, may be given:—

(1) *In distressed Mining Areas.* In the spring of 1929, the National Council of Social Service, which was then administering the Lord Mayor's Coalfields' Distress Fund, approached our Headquarters with the suggestion that Toc H should undertake the whole running of what seemed to them a constructive plan to help young unemployed miners. Standing camps were formed at Seaton Carew (Co. Durham) and Embleton (Northumberland) in which pit-lads were received in fortnightly batches of 200: 1,200 in all were in these camps that season. The Northern Area provided the whole staff in charge (see JOURNAL, October, 1929). In 1930 the Seaton Carew camp was run again with success, and was visited by the Prince of Wales (see JOURNAL, October, 1930). In 1931 a new factor came into play: a grant was made to Toc H by the Pilgrim Trust for club and camp work in the Northern Area and four clubs—for younger boys, not unemployed pit-lads—were opened in the Durham coalfield, at Consett, Bishop Auckland, Durham and Chester-le-Street. Camps in connection with these were run in 1931 and 1932. In addition, Toc H was assisted by the Pilgrim Trust, and by about 100 voluntary subscribers besides, to run camps for boys from the South Wales coalfield during July and August. Five Districts of Toc H South Wales each undertook one such camp. By the nature of things, nearly all these boys came from homes badly hit by unemployment (see JOURNAL, October, 1932).

(2) *A Mixed Camp.* Last summer Toc H in the Yorkshire Area ran a Camp at Danes Dyke, Flamborough, on the well-known lines of the Duke of York's Camp, *i.e.*, part of the camp population (aged 17-20) was drawn from Lads' Clubs in Hull and Sheffield, and part from secondary schools in Yorkshire. In point of fact the small number of school-boys who came was disappointing, and this year the Yorkshire and North Western Areas intend to join forces and to start early to recruit boys for camp from the schools. The camp is certain to contain many lads who are out of work, but the great advantage to them and to the others of both sections present, is that there is no segregation on the basis of unemployment. If the camp, well mixed, can be not only maintained but made the starting point for a living connection in some form afterwards between working (or unemployed) boys and secondary school boys one of the first and truest aims of Toc H will be carried out. (See JOURNAL, October, 1932).

Miscellaneous Schemes

A great number of efforts to help the unemployed, varying largely in their scope and usefulness, in which Toc H is concerned, do not quite come under any of the foregoing categories. We can only indicate a very few here:—

(1) *An 'Adoption' Scheme.* An idea, in the initiation and organisation of which Toc H has borne a very considerable share, is being tried out in a rather prosperous country district on the outskirts of London. Out of a scattered, largely well-to-do population of some 20,000 in the neighbourhood, only about 60-70 men seem to be unemployed: a number of these would be so even in prosperous times. There is, therefore, no real unemployment 'problem' locally. A local committee (representing the Urban District Council, the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches, Toc H, etc.) has issued an appeal to every householder to contribute a minimum of 6d. per week to an 'Unemployed Adoption Fund.' The first place to be adopted is to be a Hostel, Canteen and Night-shelter for distressed men in a poor part of London: this venture, in which Toc H is otherwise interested, is making a very hard and gallant struggle on lines of genuine fellowship to the down-and-out. The result of the appeal in the first week was £175, in amounts varying between 6d. and 10s. Not only householders, but children, domestic servants and employees in the local brickfields have taken subscription cards. The Prince of Wales has welcomed "this idea on the part of the community to give practical friendship to the unemployed."

(2) *The Collection of Gifts in kind.* Great quantities of clothing, boots, food, furniture, household goods and sports equipment have been collected and distributed in the last few years; they are still always needed. In many places, Toc H units have helped in this work, either by organising the collection of goods or doing much of the 'donkey work.' For the collection, repair and distribution of clothes and reception of money for clothes, the Personal Service League (38, Grosvenor Place, S.W.1) has recently been formed: it has the active personal interest of the Queen.

As the transport and distribution of clothes and furniture presents difficulties which often prevent people from giving goods they can well afford to spare, it is perhaps worth mentioning a plan adopted some time since by the German Government. The personal wish of President Hindenburg that the small regular Army (Reichswehr) should play a definite part in social service for the unemployed, wherever possible, has resulted in a very practical system. In towns where the Reichswehr is stationed, every Sunday morning soldiers go round with Army wagons. They halt in various streets and blow a bugle. This is the signal for householders to come out with gifts of clothing, furniture and goods of all kinds, which the soldiers load up and take to a central depot where they are sorted and

distributed according to the known needs of families in distress. Something of the same sort, on a voluntary basis, might be possible in some places in our own country.

(3) *An 'Odd Jobs Week.'* The Employment Committee in a Northern seaport issued an appeal to citizens to give 'odd jobs' (a great variety were specified) to unemployed men in the week before Christmas so that they might provide their families with a happy festival. Five thousand appeals were distributed (2,000 of these by Toc H) in residential parts of the town. Members of Toc H, themselves unemployed, ran an enquiry office each day at their headquarters. So far as is known, jobs representing about 450 days' work were found; 400-500 men and women were kept on employment as a result of the appeal. This scheme was also recommended by the Area Pilots for general adoption to members assembled at the Toc H Festival in this Area, co-operation in all cases with the local Labour Exchange being stressed.

(4) *A 'White Elephant Shop.'* In a Northern town the local Branch took the major share in setting up a Town's Committee, under the Mayor's chairmanship. Halls were opened and camps were run for the younger unemployed men. In order to raise the initial money required, members obtained shop premises for a week and received from local tradesmen gifts of 'out of date' goods of all descriptions, for which there was normally little sale, with which they stocked the shop. Members collected the goods, delivered them to purchasers and staffed the shop. The profits were £67.

(5) *On a new Housing Estate.* A slum clearance scheme in a southern seaport has produced a new housing estate. Most of its inhabitants are now unemployed and in very bad circumstances; there are 1,000 children there. A hut has been built and from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. every night it is a centre of activity into which the local Group, assisted by Petty Officers and men of the Royal Navy, throw all their weight.

(6) *A supply of Christmas Toys.* A large number of members of two Groups in North Wales were engaged for many weeks before Christmas in making all kinds of toys for the children of unemployed families. Dozens of admirable wooden railway engines and other toys were made under the supervision of a carpenter member of Toc H, and the members turned out every night until there were sufficient toys to meet requirements. They were then delivered by other members of the two Groups. Members in an East Midlands town opened a 'Dolls' Hospital' in a cinema of which the manager is a foundation member of Toc H. They mended large quantities of discarded toys and distributed them to children of the unemployed.

(7) *Creating Confidence.* In a Welsh town an attempt to start an allotment scheme led to suspicion among the unemployed that it was a dodge to deprive them of their benefit: the manager of the Labour Exchange (a Toc H member) tried, without success, to dispel this illusion. Toc H and Rotary got together, formed an Unemployed Welfare Association and decided to appeal to the unemployed to co-operate. They drew up a circular, offering to find instructors in ten different subjects or trades, which were specified: this was handed to every man at the Exchange when he drew his benefit. Suspicion still reigned—out of 800 forms issued, only 43 were sent in. A second attempt raised the number to 72 and these men were then invited to meet the promoters for a 'heart-to-heart' talk. Slowly suspicion began to give way, and a joint committee, with six unemployed members, was formed. Classes started and about 60 men are in regular attendance. Toc H has opened its rooms to them as a club, at a rental of 1s. a year. The men run the club—with the 'Silent Six' of Toc H in the background.

(8) *'Treats.'* There is scarcely need to do more than mention the great number of entertainments for unemployed people, parties for children at Christmas and other times,

and so on, which have been run or helped by Toc H units. The enjoyment to all concerned, guests and hosts alike, has been wonderful, and no one would be churlish enough to wish them not to continue—so long as the spirit of true fellowship and not of 'charity,' in the fashionable sense, presides over them. Unless they are linked with some continuous constructive effort to help the unemployed they must be labelled—with no unkindly intention—as 'stunts' rather than serious contributions to meeting a great problem. Let us go on doing them—without allowing them in any way to be "counted unto us for righteousness."

(9) *Money-raising.* Flag-days and other similar devices for extracting money from the public are, of course, often used to raise funds for the help of the unemployed, and Toc H has taken part in some of these 'drives.' The resulting money is useful, but, as has continually been pointed out, this kind of work is not a Toc H 'job' in the proper sense at all. It misses the personal touch in service which comes from the fellowship of helper and helped. Those who give, do so under pressure or, not seldom, as an easy salve to their own consciences; those who collect get a good deal of publicity and some private satisfaction but do not come near the heart of the real service needed, unless they follow up the money-raising in some much more personal way.

Finally

The foregoing notes make no pretence of being exhaustive. Many more instances to illustrate the schemes mentioned could be given; almost certainly a number of useful methods have been omitted.

Let us end with some words of the Prime Minister, broadcasting to the nation in Christmas week: "There is still a source of wealth in personal service to which the condition of so many of our people makes a moving appeal. . . The more sensitive a person is against charity the more is his heart warmed by the help of a friend. This movement towards the discovery of the community of friendship is very far removed from charity. It is the human hand supplementing the State machine, the citizen becoming a neighbour; it is a sharing of life, not merely a contribution from possessions. The Society of Friends, the Christian Social Council, the Workers Education Movement, University Settlements, the Boys' Clubs, the British Legion, Toc H, individual ministers of religion and social workers have devoted themselves to providing occupation and recreation for communities where industry has almost, or entirely ceased to work. . . We are grateful to those pioneers: they perhaps taught us more than they, or we, yet know. . . Report yourself. Join up. Contribute your knowledge. That is what we want you to do. Listen to the series of wireless talks on Friday evenings. Then ask yourself 'What is being done for the unemployed in my district? Could I do something or suggest some better plan?' If you do not know what to do, write to the National Council of Social Service or enquire of your local Employment Exchange manager what organisation has been set up in your district to work with and for the unemployed. Do not expect them to do all the planning. Make your own usefulness. . . ."

"We cannot afford to have class divisions and conflicts ruling our social and industrial life. We cannot afford great masses of unemployed people; we cannot afford to throw out into the community, further, your thousands of untrained youths, without skill in their hands and habits of co-operative work in their characters. . . This is an attempt on a national scale to find new ways of employment, to put a new spirit of co-operation and independence into our people, so that through distress and failure we may find a way to national unity and commonwealth well-being."

SCHOOLS, SCHOOLMASTERS,—AND BUMPKIN

THE other day I met one of my fellow-members of the bumpkin variety, a thoroughly estimable fellow except that his notions are somewhat medieval. "Well," he said, "and how is the S.S.B. going?" Now, no less than two years ago the S.S.B. (Schools Service Bureau) changed its title and became *The Schools Section* of Toc H. With such a change of title it might almost be said that it changed its clothes, and with unspeakable relief we had stripped off S.S.B.—heavily respectable frock-coat of a title, threadbare at the elbows, greasy at the neck—hoping that we might never more be caused to itch at the sight of it. But Bumpkin still thought that we were the Schools Service Bureau and, worse still, did not seem to mind if we were. I need not record the rest of the interview, which was sensational only so far as Bumpkin was concerned.

All this is a roundabout way of introducing the fact that "The Annual Conference of the Schools Section was held at Toc H Mark I on January 9, 1933." We might merely have said that, but it takes more ingenious 'writing-up' than that to get things into Bumpkin's head, into which we do really want to knock some of the salient things that came out of this conference. Firstly, we would have him know that some significant things are happening in the world of schools as a result of the Prince's appeal and other events. In one school there is a society of boys, who in order to raise the money to share part of their holidays in camp with working boys from industrial towns, devoted their scant leisure during term-time to cleaning master's cars, painting their greenhouses and other odd jobs, besides producing a first-rate concert. Now think: is not that rather remarkable for people with a very different tradition—the masterly lounging of the distinguished school-athlete, whose boots were cleaned and whose tea was made by trembling juniors? That is only one example of which we heard for the first time at the conference. Naturally we want to encourage exactly that kind of thing and we have not been inactive during these holidays. Representatives from 13 different public schools played Soccer on Hackney Marshes with boys from a London club: in fact, they spent practically a whole week-end getting to know individual club-boys and learning something of what a Boys' Club can be like. In London also, we have had parties from three public schools for two days each and have shown them something of life and work in docks, warehouses, elementary schools, juvenile employment exchanges, clubs, factories and the St. Pancras House Improvement Society. In at least three other big centres similar "tours" have been conducted, thanks to the efforts of our area representatives.

But what has Bumpkin got to do with all this? And why should he not go on believing in the S.S.B., the Holy Roman Empire, witches, vampires or anything he likes to believe in? Why should he keep up-to-date? The reason is that we want everyone's help, including his.

The activities just described can only be of advantage to the public school boy. Him we can provide with practical experience until his interest is so developed that he seeks for himself opportunities, maybe through Toc H, maybe otherwise, to be a 'good neighbour' to others. But we are not Ariels, and whilst doing that, we cannot also be in 67 different provincial towns at the same time, providing similar experiences for senior boys from the day-schools in them. We want these day-schools and in many cases they want us. From H.Q. we can send them speakers, see that each leaving boy has a chance to plunge into some adventure of 'good neighbourliness,' distribute literature and be responsible for every interested boy who migrates to another district. But we are powerless to provide the day-school boy with the practical experience which is the most effectual thing of all in interesting him. That is where the local Branch comes in. It must, through its schools representative, be on friendly terms with the school through our correspondent there.

This will enable it, probably at the beginning of school holidays, to ask senior boys to a special guest-night followed up by invitations to see, and to help in, some of the jobs of the Branch before the next school term begins. We quote the instance of Wellingborough where such an evening was arranged. The programme was on the usual lines, but the items were designed collectively to give a complete and balanced view of Toc H. Light was briefly explained. There was a general talk on the aims of Toc H, and the jobmaster, whom incidentally the boys had known at school, outlined the work done by the Branch and specifically invited the boys to take part in certain activities. The boys were distributed amongst the members, each member acting as host to the boy sitting next to him. Five out of nine boys accepted the jobmaster's invitation and came to help at the Deaf and Dumb Club. They have since become Probationers. At Wellingborough also there is an 'Everyboys' Club, at which, on different nights of the week, the public school boarder, the 'day-bug' and the ex-elementary schoolboy meet and hold debates, play games or have ambulance, P.T. or boxing instruction together.

All that is the result of the local Branch's effort and we depend on local Branches for the real success of our connections with day-schools. By ourselves, with occasional parade-talks, soon forgotten, and with literature for which innumerable waste-paper baskets are perpetually hungry, we can only make a vague impression.

As part of the process the more the Branch can interest the master who acts for us at the school, the better. It must, indeed, not be forgotten that the end of school-hours is not the end of a schoolmaster's work and that consequently he may have less leisure during term-time than most Branch members. Neither must anyone put any pressure on him that one would not like to have put on oneself, particularly since, as our correspondent, he is already doing valuable work for Toc H. But if the Branch can convince him that his help would be invaluable to them and show him a definite way of being useful to them or others, there is a chance, if he is not already completely occupied from morning till night, that he will not refuse. At any rate, he is far more likely to refuse a mere invitation to a meeting, which does not tell him how his attendance at it would be of the slightest use to anybody.

Such, put from the angle of Toc H as a whole, were the chief things that emerged at the annual conference of the Schools Section. We hope that even Bumpkin will now know what we want him to know—unless (horrible thought!) Bumpkin, smiling complacently at his own Bumpkinosity, is of those who despise the JOURNAL and therefore will not read this as a matter of deliberate policy.

THE ROYAL MATINEE

DURING December members must have seen many references in the press to a Royal Matinée to be given in London on behalf of the Prince of Wales' Builder Fund of Toc H. A great deal of hard work by many people went to the organisation of the Matinée which took place on December 19 at His Majesty's Theatre and some of its results can now be estimated. First of all, the financial result—the net contribution to our funds amounts to about £6,000. This in itself gives immense relief to the anxieties of our Central Executive and Finance Committee, faced with a falling-off of subscriptions, a big overdraft at the bank and the prospect of having seriously to curtail existing work in many directions and the postponement of urgent work which was already being planned. Secondly, what may be called the 'human' result is more difficult to estimate. A great many people hitherto ignorant of Toc H and untouched in any personal way by it, were drawn into its service in this effort. As the Staff Conference was forcibly

reminded last summer, 'Society' is one of the great sections of the community which Toc H has largely failed to reach and draw into co-operation in our family. As with several other sections, we have not succeeded, on the whole, in meeting them on their own ground, which is where men and women must first be sought and won. The Matinée provided a chance of this kind and it was taken fully. The General Committee of nearly a hundred (they included some extremely well-proved Toc H and L.W.H. members as well as many newcomers), the Executive Committee of eighteen and many other friends displayed great enthusiasm in their job and its object. To mention some of those who were foremost in the effort—the Duchess of Devonshire (President of L.W.H.) consented, although far from well at the time, to be Chairman of the Matinée Committee. She asked Lady Ward to act as Deputy Chairman and Mrs. Gordon-Moore as Vice-Chairman. The Marchioness of Salisbury, one of the oldest friends of Toc H, presided at the first meeting of the Committee. And this meeting was held at Yorke House, at once put at our disposal by our Patron as soon as he saw this opportunity to help. Tubby, Pat Leonard and Ronald Grant all spoke at different times on the aims and needs of Toc H at meetings for the Matinée. Three others must be mentioned—the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. W. Ellis Reynolds, on whom a great deal of work fell; and two without whom, it is safe to say, the Matinée would not have been possible at all—the Bursar of Toc H, Ted Samuel, and Mrs. Margaret Maclean.

The crowning touch, of course, was that Her Majesty the Queen, who has long known about Toc H and followed its progress with real sympathy, consented, as soon as she was approached, to be present. This adds one more item to the debt which we owe to the Royal Family for giving help to Toc H in ways in which they alone can give it. A long list of well-known people supported her as patrons of the venture.

If success to the Matinée as a social event was thus assured beforehand, much help was needed to make the show itself worthy of the occasion. This help was forthcoming from all sides. In the first place, His Majesty's Theatre, one of the most famous in the country, was again lent to us, as a contribution to the Builder Fund, by its licencees. Then Mr. Graham Moffat offered to produce his own play, that delightful old favourite *Buntly Pulls the Strings*. Not only did he and his wife and daughter play their original parts again, but every member of the company gave their services free to Toc H for the afternoon. The Band and Pipers of the Scots Guards also gave their services to make music. The management and entire staff of the Theatre threw themselves into the work with the greatest goodwill, and an anonymous friend of Toc H defrayed the necessary expenses of the afternoon. Everyone who was in the audience—and the house was packed—will agree that it was a really happy show and those who knew Toc H already recognised that the 'family spirit' was clearly present in it.

Add one more contribution—a very considerable one—Lady Houston, impressed by what she had heard of Toc H, gave a donation of £3,000 to our Patron which was included in the purse presented to the Queen for Toc H on her arrival at the Theatre.

One lasting result is likely to be that Toc H has enlarged the circle of its true friends and many have already shown themselves ready to serve it again when the time comes.

An Opportunity of Service.

ACCOUNTANT required as Assistant. Aged about 25 years. Must be experienced and willing to sacrifice a commercial career to work for a social service organisation. Write, with full details of qualifications, experience and commencing salary required, to: Box X10, Toc H JOURNAL.

A BAG OF BOOKS

The Four Points in Action

What I Owe to Christ. By C. F. Andrews. Hodder & Stoughton. 5s. nett.

Many people disagree with, even if they do not actively dislike, Mr. C. F. Andrews' Indian opinions and activities. But even his most convinced opponents will not deny his sincerity and his courage. This book—and it is a very great book—lets us into the secret which has made him through all his life so great a friend and servant of his fellows. It sounds arrogant, and yet it is true, to claim that it is the story of what we call “the Toc H spirit” in action—the Four Points of the Compass: fellowship, fair-mindedness, service, the Kingdom of God, are its ever-recurring theme.

Though Mr. Andrews' activities have been such for the past thirty years that we chiefly associate his name with India, and with the service of oppressed coloured people in various parts of the world, it was in this country, on Tyneside and off the Old Kent Road, that he first learned really to know and love men.

The story of the Pembroke College Mission as here told has much in it to call to mind the story of the early days of the O.B.C. as told by Barkis and others. And the results were very similar: “The great pity of this life at Walworth was that it touched bed-rock humanity at every point, with all conventions brushed on one side. Men and women were round about us, struggling to meet the hardest facts of hunger and want without flinching, and we tried to share their hard lot with them, as far as that was possible. There was no difficulty in loving and serving people like these.” In his own humble way many an ordinary Toc H member could parallel this out of his own experience.

The section which deals with his Indian activities is of necessity the most controversial. Some will be deeply moved by it, others entirely unconvinced. But after reading it all will at least be forced to admit that whatever course of action Mr. Andrews has followed in Indian affairs, he has followed because to him it was crystal clear that Christ demanded it.

Few can have approached the great non-Christian religions of India and the East with more sympathy and understanding than he. Many have criticized his radical views in this respect. All the more striking, therefore, is his testimony, when he tells us, speaking out of an intimate knowledge such as few possess: “After nearly thirty years of life spent in the East certain great facts in my religious thinking stand out. By far the greatest of these is this—that Christ has become not less central but more central and universal; not less divine but more so. I can see Him as the pattern of all that is best in Asia as well as Europe.”

There are things in this story that some of us to-day would express otherwise. The religious language is sometimes a little old-fashioned, but he would be very foolish who allows himself to be deterred from this great story by that fact. Here is a life of service such as this generation delights to know—and the secret of it, no mere humanitarianism, but love for Christ. The last chapter will deepen and widen our whole conception of “The Elder Brethren,” that company who are united by “the open secret of love for the one Master, who died for them that they might live to Him.” Wherever in Branch or Group there is a library, this book should be put into it, and where there is not surely some generous member will be found to buy it for others, and read it himself, that we may gain new confidence in following out the four points of our Compass through reading of them in action.

D. J. W.

The "Scouts' Own"

Scouts' Own. By the Rev. M. P. G. Leonard. C. Arthur Pearson, 2s. 6d.

By this book, as Sir Percy Everett, the Chief Scout's Commissioner, points out in his foreword, Pat Leonard adds a fresh contribution to his two special services to Scouting—the enlistment of the help of Toc H and the strengthening of the links between Scouting and the Churches. A 'Scouts' Own,' as all scouts know, is the name given to a corporate act of worship specially for scouts, whether it be a service or the equivalent of a Bible Class. And in the compass of this little book Pat has provided an astonishing amount of material for both. There are a number of alternative suggestions, with complete examples, for morning ('Flagbreak') and evening ('Camp-fire') prayers, eight different forms of service for 'parades,' and a rich treasury of prayers, thanksgivings, short lessons and hymns. As we should confidently expect, the book is full from cover to cover with real understanding of what a boy needs and looks for in his worship; it rises right above the conventions and unrealities of a host of little pious 'manuals.' Now that Scouters and Guiders (for it is also adapted for Girl Guides) have the book in their hands, they may well wonder how they have managed to do without it so long. It seems indispensable.

A Merry Mountaineer

A Merry Mountaineer: Clifford Harris of Persia. Told by R. W. Howard. C.M.S., 1s.

A simply told story of a short but gallant life, nobly lived, and joyously laid down in the service of Christ and of the people of Persia. This small book was written chiefly for young people, but the story is told in a way that appeals to young and old alike.

Clifford Harris, of Christ's Hospital and King's College, London, was the son of a former vicar of Wadhurst. Full of energy and good spirits, he expended these to the full in fearless Christian living. After taking honours in Theology, he went out as a short service worker to the Stuart Memorial College, Isfahan.

Clifford's influence amongst the boys was felt in all departments of school life, and he had the rare gift of getting the very best out of those with whom he came in contact. In swimming and other branches of athletics he was a leader whom boys would readily follow, but in the midst of an exceptionally active life as a public schoolmaster, he always found time to visit the Persian villages. It was the welfare of the villagers that lay closest to his heart, and it was to them that he longed to take the Gospel.

The story of his last few weeks of his life, and of his passing on, is a witness that the Spirit of Christ moves men to deepest sacrifice to-day, as in all Christian history.

This little book, read aloud in the library of the Old House, has deeply moved several recent parties of Poperinghe pilgrims, with the example of one of the post-war Elder Brethren.

Two All Hallows' Reprints

The Foundations of Toc H, a description of "Talbot House in Flanders and the Houses or 'Marks' of Toc H" was originally contributed by Tubby to an American newspaper in 1922. It has now been revised by him; half-a-dozen brief illustrations of the effect of Toc H on different types of men have been added (3d.; 2s. 6d. per dozen). *The Captain* is a chapter from a war-time book (*As Tommy sees us*) by the Rev. A. H. Gray—a remarkable chapter that a good many still remember reading in those days and for the reprint of which they will be truly grateful to Tubby (2d.; 1s. 6d. per dozen).

MULTUM IN PARVO

☛ Heartiest congratulations from us all to the following on whom His Majesty the King bestowed New Year honours: PHILIP CLAYTON (Founder Padre)—a Companion of Honour; Col. CUSACK WALTON—Knight (Lady Walton also received the Kaiser-i-Hind Silver Medal); General Sir CHARLES ('TIM') HARRINGTON—G.C.B.

☛ We welcome Sir JOHN CADMAN, G.C.M.G.—at whose invitation Tubby visited the Persian oilfields at Christmas, 1931—as a *Vice-President* of Toc H. The appointment is made to March, 1935.

☛ Padre F. G. REEVES, after nearly five years in the West Midlands as a much-beloved Area Padre, has left Warwickshire to take up his new appointment as Rector of Pinxton in Derbyshire. Our gratitude and best wishes to him and Mrs. Reeves. We are hopeful that "REEVO" will still be able to see a lot of Toc H, for his many friends will want to see him.

☛ 'TIM' HARRINGTON (Vice-President, Chairman Aldershot Command Group) and CYRIL OSBORNE (Leicester, East Midlands Area Executive) have been appointed members of the Central Executive.

☛ COLIN STEVENSON (Assistant Secretary, North Western Area) is temporarily helping RONALD GRANT (Secretary, Southern Area).

☛ Sincere congratulations to TRUMAN TANQUERAY (School Correspondent, Eastbourne College, Chairman of Mid-Sussex District) on his appointment as Headmaster of Ipswich Grammar School; and to DENIS G. GILMAN (District Pilot, Derby) on his appointment as Deputy Town Clerk of Derby.

☛ The Annual Meeting of the Central Council will be held at 42, Trinity Square, London, E.C.3, at 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 22.

☛ A very successful Area Festival for the SOUTH WESTERN AREA was held at Exeter on January 7-8. A report will appear in the March JOURNAL.

☛ Major STUART AKERS, Toc H Commissioner for Tanganyika, is making a long tour overseas and is keen to get in touch with members and units interested. His itinerary, roughly, is as follows:— *British Somaliland*, March and April (c/o The Treasury, Berbera, British Somaliland); *Kenya* and *Uganda*, May to July (c/o Gorobat Estate, P.O., Kitale, Kenya Colony); *Tanganyika*, August and September (c/o The Treasury, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanganyika); *Madagascar* and *Mauritius*, October; *Tanganyika*, November; *Nyasaland*, *Rhodesia* and *South Africa*, Dec., 1933 to April, 1934.

☛ Fleet Secretaries, Shore Correspondents and others concerned with Toc H in the ROYAL NAVY are reminded that communications should be addressed to the Headquarters Commissioner for the Navy, 47, Francis St., S.W.1, and not personally to Captain Rodney Scott, who is about to move from his present address. (See notice in February JOURNAL, 1932).

☛ Branch and Group Secretaries are earnestly requested to inform the Overseas Office, 42, Trinity Square, E.C.3, of the names and destinations of any of their members proceeding overseas. This information should be supplied well in advance of their departure in order that they may have the chance of an interview with the Hon. Overseas Commissioner concerned, and of introductions to Toc H members overseas.

☛ The Toc H RUGGER Seven-a-Side Tournament will be held this year on the London Toc H Sports Ground at New Barnet on Saturday, March 16. All queries, suggestions and entries to Geoffrey Batchelar, 42, Trinity Square, E.C.3.

☛ Evesham Group desire it to be known that the person WARD, who has been visiting Toc H units in various parts of the country and stating that he is 'Ward, of Evesham Group,' is *not* FRANK WARD, Jobmaster of Evesham Group; he is not, and never has been, a member of the Evesham Group.

THE ELDER BRETHREN

William Tregonwell Collier : Oxford Branch

The passing of 'BILLY' COLLIER in November, at the early age of 43, after little more than a week's illness, was a great loss to Oxford, the University, the City, the Radcliffe Infirmary where he worked as a doctor and to the causes to which he gave so steadily the spare time of a very busy career—the Balliol Boys' Club, the J.O.C., and Toc H. A man of singular powers and charm, he will never be forgotten by his many friends.

Edward J. Davies : Port Talbot Branch

"The Skipper" passed over on November 23, after a long illness, at the age of 61. In his younger days a sea-captain, he spent his later years in looking after the welfare of aged seamen and their dependents all over South Wales. He represented Toc H on the local N.S.P.C.C. and Nursing Association; he served his church as churchwarden for many years. Through Toc H and in other ways his "rent" was indeed well paid.

Tony Levett : Secretary of Wooler Group

TONY LEVETT had a motor accident in December from which he died a few days later. He was an eager Secretary and worked hard to set Wooler Group on its feet. During the war he was a subaltern in the R.E. in Mesopotamia, and was deeply impressed by his visit, with a Northern Area Pilgrimage, to the Old House last summer.

George Robertson Campbell : Chairman of Darlington District

GEORGE CAMPBELL, who died suddenly while Mayor of Darlington, embodied in his own life the best in Toc H. He was modest, slow of speech, yet always radiantly happy and at his post. He exercised a quiet and very deep spiritual influence on his younger fellow-members, and is greatly missed by them.

William Bissett Leitch : Liverpool

MR. LEITCH, who passed over on November 27 after an operation, was a true benefactor to Toc H, for by making possible the appointment of Michael Westropp as a full-time man, he enabled a decisive advance to be made in our work at Liverpool.

TOC H, ITS MARK

WE sometimes forget that we talk a language of our own inside Toc H and that 'Lamps of Maintenance,' 'Jobmasters' and 'Marks' are Greek to the world outside. The London Area office was recently puzzled by a little stream of telephone enquiries about Mark I, not apparently from prospective hostellers or donors of new carpets. The explanation appeared in *John o' London's Weekly* of December 24, when the results of a 'General Knowledge Competition' were published. Here is Question 95: *What is known as Mark One, England?* Answer: "24, Pembroke Gardens, Notting Hill Gate, W.2 (a Toc H Hostel)." The judges comment: "Competitors evidently were very confused here. Several realised that the question had something to do with Toc H, but very few gave a completely correct answer. It was variously described as a Masonic Degree, the first British Tank, Monomark, National Mark on English Produce, Boundary between England and Wales, a Nursing Sister, Roast Sirloin of Beef, Woolwich Arsenal, Eddystone Lighthouse, Cordite, and a Rugby Football Team."

Miscellaneous Advertisements

INSTEAD of visiting cards show your name and unit at the Birthday Festivals by wearing a "Brangro" Identity Badge. See our advertisement in October Journal or send for a specimen from the **SCRIPTORIUM PRESS**, 85, Forest Lane, London, E.15. Telephone: Maryland 2940.

VISITING YPRES? SHANNON HOTEL Opp. Menin Gate, Brit. Owner-Manager. Capt. Leo Knox, late A.S.C. English food, quiet, from 5/- per day 10% dis. Toc H.

TOC H HOUSE, BOURNEMOUTH.—Noted for its comfort and company both winter and summer. Handy for everything. Permanent and temporary guests. Terms, apply Resident Warden, 20, Poole Road.

SPEND your happiest holiday in this comfortable residence standing in its own grounds overlooking picturesque surroundings of this quaint seaside village. From 2 gns.—Mrs. BOWLING, "Rosemount," Combmartin, N. Devon.

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For Group or Branch use, with emblem in two colours. 100 Sheets, 10 x 8, 5s. One colour, 4s.
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WESTBOURNE PARK BUILDING SOCIETY

offers a simple method of assistance to house purchasers in London and the Home Counties.

The Society Advances a large proportion of the Purchase Price of the house you may select. By reduced monthly repayments which may now be arranged from 13/8 per £100 per month inclusive of principal and interest, you are enabled in an agreed term of years to return the Advance made and the property becomes your own.

The "Westbourne Park" has, since its foundation nearly fifty years ago, assisted more than 45,000 persons to become home-owners, and has advanced over £20,000,000 towards house purchase.

WRITE TO-DAY for Prospectus TA/1, free from:—

George E. Jeffries, F.I.S.A., Secretary, WESTBOURNE HOUSE,
WESTBOURNE GROVE, LONDON, W.2

THE FAMILY OVERSEAS

Southern Africa

WE report the way two things are done in Southern Africa that have happened recently in England. The first is a Birthday Festival, and it comes in the future tense from the Transvaal. "Perhaps the most important feature of the Festival is that Dingaan's Day will have a big share in the commemoration. With the co-operation of Afrikaans-speaking friends, we shall try, at the Thanksgiving Service to be held in All Souls' Memorial Chapel on the Friday morning, to think of the wider message of Dingaan's Day, not the victory of White over Black, nor even solely of the indomitable courage and unfaltering faith of the Voortrekkers. Rather we shall see a vision of contented peoples composing a God-fearing nation, and we shall strive mightily to begin by 'thinking fairly' of the whole of our racial relationships in South Africa. After the service there will be tennis, cricket, and a picnic lunch at the Zoo Lake, Johannesburg. In the evening, due to the kindness of Kimberley in lending their recently imported lantern and slides, we shall see for the first time in this form the life of the Old House, and realise better from the war and post-war pictures of the battlefields the spirit that was in our Elder Brethren. Neville Talbot has promised to be with us to make the slides live."

The next affair is the participation of the membership in Armistice services. Again, the scene is Johannesburg where the units have sent their men to watch before the South African Memorial Lamp burning unceasingly in the Chapel of All Souls, in an all-night vigil. On this occasion, owing to the public service for Armistice night in Joubert Park being cancelled, the first hour's service that led up to the vigil was of a public character. Nearly five hundred people were there. As eight o'clock came jangling into every clock tower in the town, the Cathedral was darkened for 'Light'; into the darkness, voice after voice taking up the tale, were read the names of more than two hundred Elder Brethren, to be remembered in the silence of the vigil. Here words ended and music came in with the litany, *Out of the night, out of the darkness, out of a far country, The least of Thy sons is coming home.* Alone in the utter darkness of both chapel and great cathedral the Lamp burned until trumpets sounding the *Last Post* and *Reveille* lit all the lights. This was a people's service. Here were grateful mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters. . . Now it was time for the first watch, to which, as to each succeeding watch, was recited Donald Cox's poem, *Here is a quiet room.*

Then, to close this excursion, let us close our eyes and pick on any unit and hear what it has to say. Here is *Zeerust* in the busy Far West Transvaal. "We are still doing very fine indeed; as a matter of fact, too fine after our liking. Now we have a central meeting place of our own, attendance has kept up well. The only snag about our Group at present is that we have been getting such a great number of newcomers. At the last three meetings our attendance has gone from sixteen to thirty-three. We cannot exactly see the reason for this, as we certainly did not go about our little dorp canvassing for new fellows. We have always been following the policy of waiting for fellows to come of their own accord. We can only pray for strength and wisdom to enable us to train them all in the true spirit of Toc H. After the hard fight we have had to get Toc H into *Zeerust*, we do feel it our individual responsibility to keep it on right lines to become a real power house for good. Another fight is to keep from becoming just a social club. Not that there is a shortage of jobs; our difficulty is to pick the suitable men from so many volunteers. We have now school teachers, tradesmen, and even farmers among us, and are a proper cosmopolitan lot."

DESPATCHES OF THE MONTH

From the Southern Area

I ASKED the Editor what he really required in an Area Letter; he replied, "We don't want lists of meetings, nor social entertainments, nor jobs, except such as may be out of the ordinary, and chatty letters from the Area Secretary to his Toc H friend, Bloggs, from Muddleton-cum-Splosh, can be overdone."

"Good," I said. "What *do* you want?"

"Well, the most useful thing would be a sort of essay on the general progress and development in your Area in not less than 700 words," replied the Editor.

Personally, I don't think the Editor knows what he does want, so that's that, and this is this. Of course, as I pointed out to him, visible progress in six months could probably be reported on a fly's thumb-nail and did not require 700 words, but what I fancy he considers Toc H in general is more likely to be interested in, is *invisible* progress. Now we are all becoming familiar with the language, at least, of economics so let us consider "visible and invisible exports," because Toc H as it is progressing must be giving out increasingly the whole time, both on the practical or active side and the spiritual.

Visible Exports.—The Rushlight goes to *Witney, Cowley* and *Aldershot*. The former is the blanket town and Toc H there has the keen support of the Early family, the pioneers of the Witney Blanket Industry, and known widely as leaders in the Methodist world. *Cowley* is synonymous with Morris Motors and here is a wide and useful field for spreading the contagion of Toc H in a big industrial works. *Aldershot* is to a certain extent a rekindling, although working in a different sphere from the old Branch. The original Light taken to Aldershot Town some eight years ago grew dim, flickered and then expired. The flame springs up again in the Army, the cradle of Toc H's first beginnings. In the fanning of this new flame Aldershot Town members have played a gallant part. The Aldershot Command Group consists of four wings—Bordon, North Camp, South Camp, and (still in embryo), Blackdown and Deepcut. Although essentially an Army unit, it has, and will always have, its civilian members to complete the family. So far the membership is keen and active. The problem of jobs is to a certain extent solved by the vicinity of Aldershot Town. Continuity should be safeguarded by the fact that there are so many Units stationed in Aldershot that on no occasion would it be likely that they would all be moving thence at the same time. The work of this new Group will be closely watched by those within and without Toc H who desire to see expansion within the Services and it has, therefore, a high standard to set. (A photograph taken at a meeting of the Group on December 12 appeared in last month's JOURNAL, Plate VI.).

Poole also received its Rushlight, and some indication as to how it is burning is given by a considerable piece of work it has undertaken for the unemployed: this is described in some detail among the examples of service given in the report *Toc H and the Unemployed* earlier in this number of the JOURNAL. *Swanage* is also responsible for a similar scheme which is now being considered by the Town Council. Staines, uniting with Englefield Green under the title of the *Runnymede* Group, has received its Light; *Witney* and *Slough* both received their Lamps at the Birmingham Festival.

Invisible Exports.—It may seem a paradox, but I think first of the cancellation of two Groups in Southampton, namely, *Southampton Town* and *Shirley*. I am putting these definitely on the credit side, which indicates that Southampton Town realises that 'unity is strength' and that by linking up for the time with Southampton Branch at Mark V they can strengthen each other and gain fresh inspiration and enthusiasm. Shirley relin-

quishes its Rushlight only to Grope again in more fertile ground close by. The Area Padre, Bill Evans, writes most confidently about Southampton, and the hard work he has put in there since he took over from Padre Higham will bear fruit in a deeper appreciation of the power which Toc H has at its disposal if it realises to Whom to go to draw on it.

Here, may I interpolate that it is with real regret that we lose Robert Radcliffe, who leaves Talbot House to get married. The silver lining to this cloud is that we are able to welcome Jack Clarke in whom the *Sea-going Boys' Hostel* is indeed fortunate to find a successor. Jack's new appointment is a loss to Bournemouth, where for a time he was House Warden. There are indications, however, that even in the short time he was there his previous years' experience as Warden of Toc H Marks was helpful.

The *Thames Valley*, *Isle of Wight* and *Bournemouth* District Committees have tackled their jobs with real zest, and the effects of Training Week-ends and Conferences in these Districts is driving the roots of Toc H deeper.

The *first* fruits of the Toc H Week at *Portsmouth* is shown by the fact that units there are realising the need for their own rooms where they can develop the Family spirit to its fullest advantage. Elsewhere in the Area there are definite signs of the missionary spirit.

A realisation of the purpose of Toc H and zeal and enthusiasm for carrying it out is the *sine qua non* for District and Unit Officers, that is to say, they are leaders of Toc H because these appointments are, or should be, filled through the qualification of leadership. Invisible exports are dependent on this leadership and as they succeed in permeating our Districts, Branches and Groups with this sense of purpose and enthusiasm, so will visible exports appear in new Groups and new jobs. There are real difficulties in building a team for the District in rural areas like Dorset, owing to distances and transport. I believe that this can be overcome, but in the meantime the team there are striving to provide inspiration and guidance by Training Week-ends.

Padre Evans has a big task in Southampton with the Mark and the Sea-going Boys' Club. The North-Western Area have lent us Colin Stevenson temporarily as Assistant Area Secretary to release me from office routine and I hope to be able to be of more help in the Districts, but the real ambassadors of Toc H are its District and Unit Officers; may the New Year see their work continue to prosper.

R. C. G.

From Northern Ireland

SINCE *last* news of Toc H Ireland appeared in the JOURNAL we have had very stirring times. They began with the visit of our Patron H.R.H. The Prince of Wales to open the Northern Ireland Houses of Parliament at Stormont; when, with his usual interest in Toc H, he managed to spare the time, in spite of all his official duties, to visit us in the Newsboys' Club. We and the Club gave him an Irish welcome and he led the cheers when the Boys' Mouth-organ Band played a selection.

We held our *first* annual Area Rally in the following week and, if one can take the word of so many of our guests who told us that it was a definitely good show (for beginners), we should be rather proud of our *first* effort. We had with us as chief guest, Barclay Baron, who was to us all an inspiration. Padre Howard, Arthur Lodge, Michael Westropp and Colin Stevenson, and some fourteen members from the North Western Area, including two members of L.W.H., were our honoured guests. The inspiration born of our Rally has resulted in pioneers setting out on the adventure of forming new 'groves' and it is hoped in due course to report five new Units.

Ireland's loss has been England's gain in the departure from Belfast of our good friend and Father of Toc H in Northern Ireland, Pat Armour; our good wishes go with him and with Mrs. Armour; also our hopes that we will always be favoured with his continued interest in Toc H Ireland.

From the Home Fleet

HERE is our second report. Our Toc H activities have necessarily been more limited this cruise owing to so much time being spent up North, but there are two outstanding events—Tubby's unofficial visit to a depleted Home Fleet, and later, his visit to a meeting of Naval Toc H members and probationers at Portsmouth, of which a more detailed report appears below.

Toc H units at the following places were visited and some interesting meetings took place and jobs were done: *Weymouth, Invergordon, Torquay, Great Yarmouth, Folkestone, Sunderland, Southend, Whitby and Falmouth.*

At *Weymouth*, members from *Rodney* attended a meeting at the Branch at which Captain R. J. R. Scott, R.N., was the speaker. Since the Fleet was at *Weymouth* in June a Group has been formed at *Portland*, principally for us Naval chaps. Whilst the Fleet was at *Rosyth*, certain Naval members and probationers met the *Edinburgh* Branch at their meetings, and the Branch kindly loaned their Headquarters for a Naval night on October 8. At *Invergordon*, the new grope was visited by several members. This unit has been started since the Fleet's visit there in May (in case of any misunderstanding, it was not formed through any efforts of Fleet members, although we hope we have given them some encouragement). Good luck to *Invergordon*! We hope to see more of you. It was most difficult to arrange a Naval meeting when all ships were present at either *Rosyth* or *Invergordon*, as the Fleet was scattered.

Tubby paid an unofficial visit to the Fleet at a time when ships with most members of Toc H on board had left *Rosyth*. He was in bed most of the time with a cold, but he was able to meet members from *Nelson, Hood and Renown*, and some further members and probationers were thus discovered. On Armistice Day, *Courageous* members met in the Chapel and remembered the Elder Brethren during the Silence.

On Tuesday, November 22, Tubby visited Naval members and probationers at a meeting held at the Y.M.C.A. *Portsmouth*. This was a unique occasion as it was Tubby's first sight of Toc H in the Navy. Although the meeting was held at *Portsmouth*, *Devonport* and *Chatham* were represented by members from *Rodney* and *Valiant*, as these ships were in port. A permanent record was made in the shape of a photograph. There were seventy members, probationers and guests present, of which at least forty-five were members of the R.N. and R.A.F. drawn from the Home Fleet and ships and establishments at *Portsmouth*. Tubby took Light and then conducted *Rogerum*. The Chairman, Brownjohn (*Home Fleet Secretary*) gave an account of how Toc H works in the Home Fleet and its activities. Captain Rodney Scott, R.N., talked to us on what Toc H is expected to do and be in the Navy. Gallienne (*Shore Correspondent at Portsmouth*) asked us to try and help the struggling units of Toc H when we leave our ships and join up with a shore unit. Tubby, although he had been in bed the previous day, then talked to us for an hour. We could have stood or sat much more. It is a pity his speech cannot be given verbatim. We felt it a great privilege to have him with us, and we sincerely hope it will not be the last time. The meeting concluded with home-going prayers taken by Tubby. (The photograph appeared in January JOURNAL, Plate VI.).